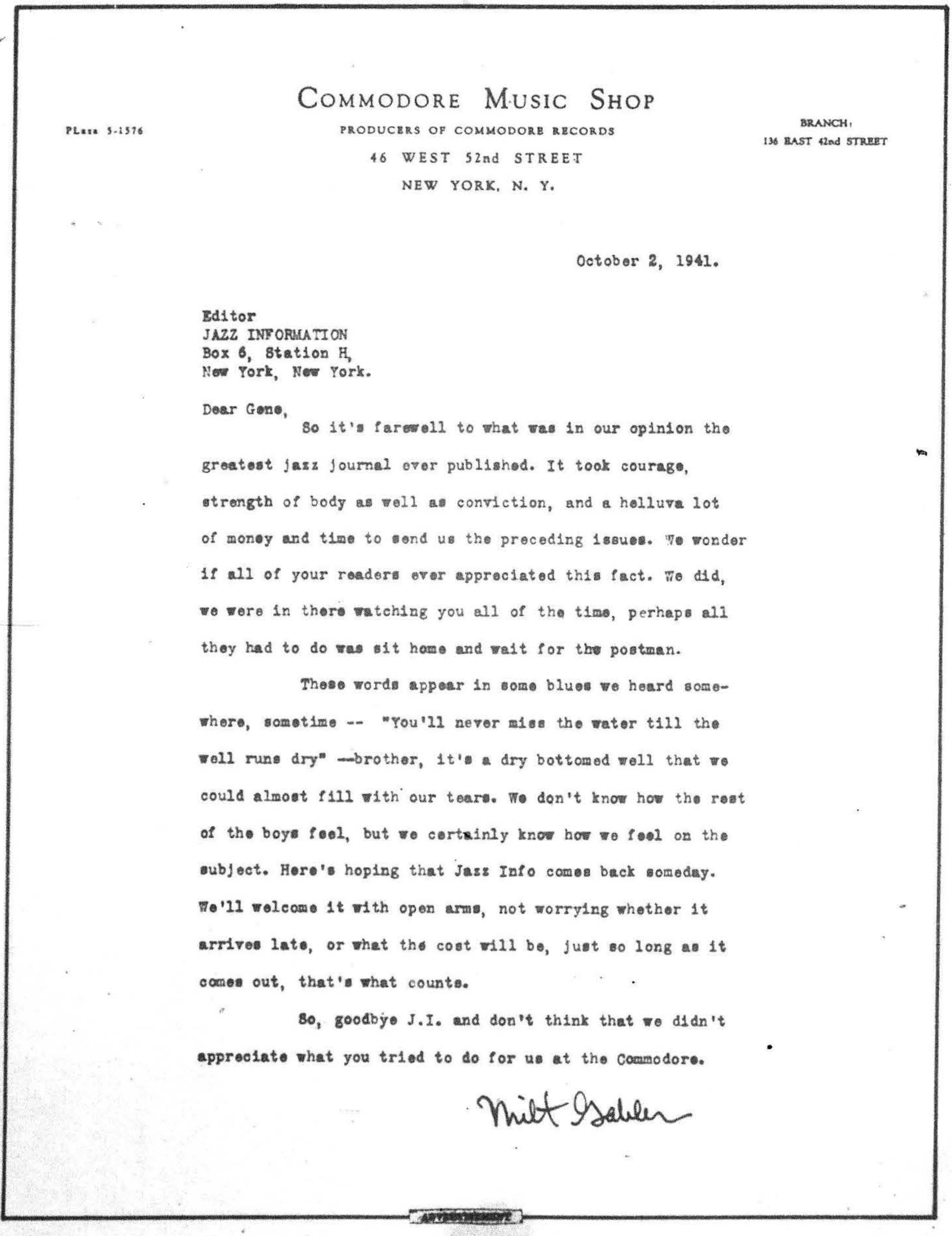
JAZZ INFORMATION

NOVEMBER

FIFTY CENTS



COMMODORE MUSIC SHOP
PRODUCERS OF COMMODORE RECORDS
46 WEST 52nd STREET
NEW YORK, N. Y.

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136 EAST 42nd STREET

October 2, 1941.

Editor
JAZZ INFORMATION
Box 6, Station H,
New York, New York.

Dear Gene,

So it's farewell to what was in our opinion the greatest jazz journal ever published. It took courage, strength of body as well as conviction, and a helluva lot of money and time to send us the preceding issues. We wonder if all of your readers ever appreciated this fact. We did, we were in there watching you all of the time, perhaps all they had to do was sit home and wait for the postman.

These words appear in some blues we heard somewhere, sometime -- "You'll never miss the water till the well runs dry" --brother, it's a dry bottomed well that we could almost fill with our tears. We don't know how the rest of the boys feel, but we certainly know how we feel on the subject. Here's hoping that Jazz Info comes back someday. We'll welcome it with open arms, not worrying whether it arrives late, or what the cost will be, just so long as it comes out, that's what counts.

So, goodbye J.I. and don't think that we didn't appreciate what you tried to do for us at the Commodore.

Milt Gabler

ADVERTISEMENT

JAZZ INFORMATION

NOVEMBER, 1941

VOL. II, NO. 16

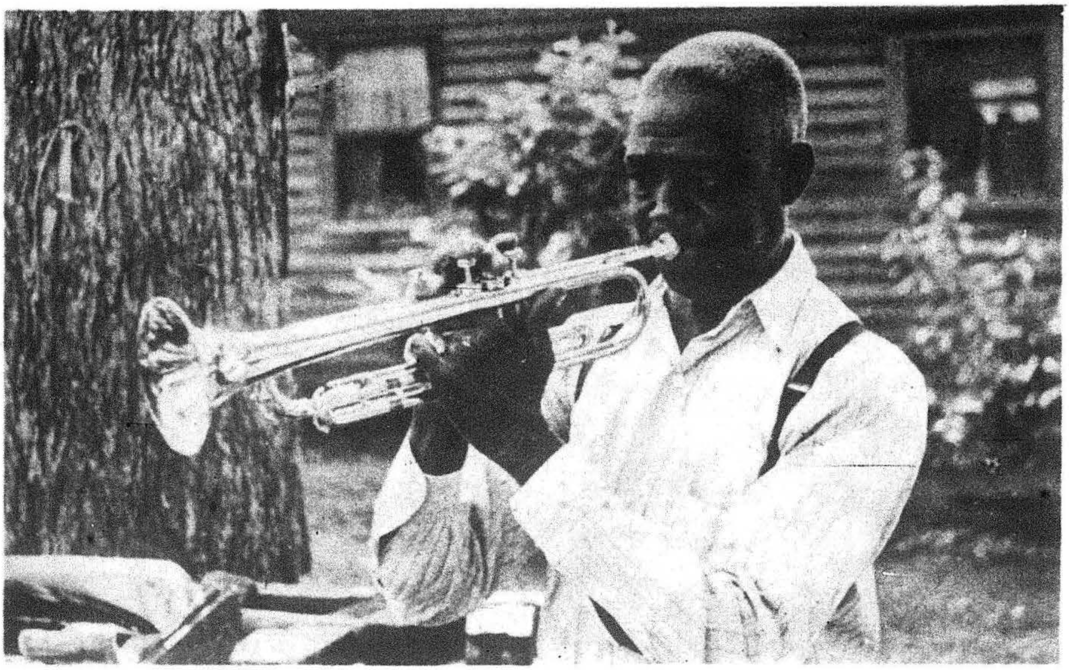
IN THIS ISSUE

BUNK JOHNSON (Photograpns).......George Sabback 4
WHAT'S NEW IN JAZZ........................... 5
JUNE CLARK....Herman Rosenberg & Eugene Williams 11
JAMES P. JOHNSON..................Ross Russell 20
JELLY ROLL MORTON ON RECORDS.....Hugues Panassie 25
PANASSIE AFTER FIVE YEARS..........Walter Sidney 29
LITTLE MITCH...................Wesley M. Neff 32
SOMETHING KEEPS A WORRYIN' ME...Ralph J. Gleason 36
LU WATTERS' YERBA BUENA BAND.....Eugene Williams 37
A NOTE ON WARD PINKETT...................... 39
THE CAVALIER..................James Higgins 40
LIMITED EDITION REISSUE ANNOUNCEMENTS.......... 43
NEW RECORDS..................George M. Avakian 53
JAZZ CLASSICS.................Robert Quinlisk 64
COLLECTORS ITEMS........................... 84
BOOK REVIEW ("Send Me Down")....Ralph J. Gleason 91
EDITORIAL.................................. 93
READERS' COMMENTS.......................... 102

Cover photograph of James P. Johnson
by Libsohn and Ehrenberg, New York.

WITH THIS ISSUE, JAZZ INFORMATION SUSPENDS PUBLICATION

JAZZ INFORMATION was published every second Friday at Box 6, Station H, New York City, with an annual subscription rate of $3.00. Special final issue, Volume II, Number 16, price 50 cents. Editor and publisher, Eugene Williams. Assistants for this issue: Herman Rosenberg, New York; John Steiner, Chicago. The name "JAZZ INFORMATION" is registered, and may not be used by any person without authorization.



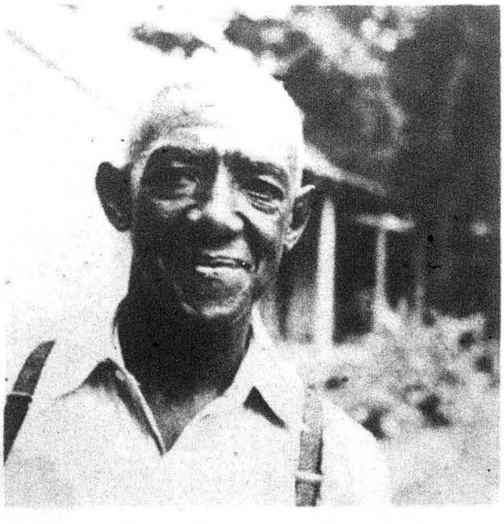
BUNK JOHNSON WILL RECORD!

The almost legendary New Orleans cornetist, still hale and hearty at almost 62, is expected to come to New York soon to record some New Orleans music for Victor with his old friend Sidney Bechet.

This sensational news was a trade secret until Louis Armstrong broke the story in an article written for The Baton, a music magazine.

Armstrong wrote that he had met Bunk and other old friends on a recent visit to the home town. Bunk told him he'd heard from Bechet about making "some recordings of the good old days". Louis added: "Now, if this happens, it ought to be real good."

And good it should be, if the stories we've heard of Bunk are true. In New Orleans from 1895 Bunk was known as a marvel on the horn. Playing with Buddy Bolden and later the Eagle Band, he won the admiration of a whole generation of musicians. The old-timers still say Bunk didn't have Louis' power, or his range — but in other respects he was Armstrong's equal. Playing a light, matchlessly rhythmic lead, he really made the band *go*.



The new photographs of Bunk on this page were taken by George Sabback, San Francisco cornetist who is now in New York. Sabback visited Bunk this summer, talked with him and heard him play a little. He reports that Bunk is still a fine man and a fine musician. The top snapshot shows Bunk trying out Sabback's horn in the back yard of his home in New Iberia, Louisiana.

What's New in Jazz...

NEWS IN BRIEF

Five colored musicians arrived in New York September 15 from Portugal, ex-members of a band which the war left stranded in Switzerland. The men are bass-player June Coles, tenor sax Johnny Russell, trumpeters Louis Bacon and Henry Mason, and drummer Tommy Benford. The leader, Willie Lewis, came home October 5 on a later ship.

Trumpeter "Dizzy" Gillespie left Cab Calloway to take Taft Jordan's place in Ella Fitzgerald's band. Shad Collins took the Calloway spot Gillespie vacated... Dave Tough left Benny Goodman in May and was replaced by Sidney Catlett; in October, Ralph Collier replaced Catlett.

Zutty Singleton continues at Jimmy Ryan's, on 52nd Street in New York, where he opened last March. He has added Sidney De Paris, trumpet, and Al Morgan, bass, to his original combination, which included Don Frye on piano and Joe Eldridge, alto sax, besides Zutty's drums.

Three leaders of white name bands have followed Goodman's lead in hiring star colored musicians as featured trumpeters. The leaders are Gene Krupa,

COLUMBIA'S REISSUES

Regular releases of Columbia's Hot Jazz Classics continued during the summer. The "Hot Trombones" album of last March was followed by one for the Dorsey Brothers, an Armstrong Hot Five album, a package of Teddy Wilson and Billie Holiday discs, a "Hot Trumpets" collection and - in October - the "Louis and Earl" album featuring Armstrong sides with Hines and Zutty. Included in the latter set were two previously unissued recordings, Chicago Breakdown and Don't Jive Me.

Besides the albums, four single records were issued: Bix Beiderbecke's Jazz Me Blues and At The Jazz Band Ball, Red Norvo's Blues in E Flat and Bughouse, Duke Ellington's Mississippi Moan and previously unissued That Rhythm Man, and Santo Pecora's Magnolia Blues and I Never Knew What A Gal Could Do (both previously unissued).

George Avakian, collector and critic who was in charge of the reissues under John Hammond's supervision, left Columbia and entered Uncle Sam's conscript army in August. The reissue program will continue as already planned, Hammond promises, with albums and single records scheduled up to Christmas.

◆

DECCA CAPTURES BRUNSWICK-VOCALION RIGHTS

Decca continued to go album-wild during the summer, issuing packaged records of every conceivable kind. Of interest to collectors are the three "Gems of Jazz" albums, including special hot jazz recordings made for English Parlophone, Decca and Columbia, now available in the U. S. for the first time; a second "Boogie Woogie" album, which included Meade "Lux" Lewis' Mr. Freddie Blues and some other old sides; etc.

Decca's biggest scoop, however, was its purchase of rights to all Brunswick and

Vocalion titles made prior to 1931, with remaining master files. These rights, owned by Warner Brothers since old Brunswick days, had been sought unsuccessfully by Columbia. The new Decca property includes numbers of Duke Ellington, Red Nichols, Jimmie Noone and Jabbo Smith titles, besides many boogie piano solos and important single records.

In spite of rumors that Decca might not make use of the masters and rights it had obtained, executives of that company announced that albums of Ellington, Nichols and Pine-Top Smith would be forthcoming.

Meanwhile, Columbia dropped its Brunswick label, transferring many post-1931 Brunswicks to the Columbia name. The Vocalion label was discontinued last year, when the name okeh was revived as a substitute.

COMING: THE JAZZ RECORD BOOK

Smith and Durell, publishers of a volume on classical recordings called *The Record Book*, announce fall publication of *The Jazz Record Book*, edited by Charles Edward Smith with the assistance of William Russell, Fred Ramsey and Charles Rogers.

The book, which should be on the presses when this magazine appears, will list about one thousand hot records, with descriptive comments. It will be a selective list rather than a discography, and is intended for the general public rather than for collectors in particular. Of special interest to collectors, however, will be such new features as a chapter by Smith on the St. Louis ragtime school and its influence.

PANASSIE'S NEW BOOK AND OTHERS

The manuscript of Hugues Panassie's new book, *Le Vrai Jazz* (The Real Jazz) is now in the United States. Hoyte D. Kline, nationally known Cleveland collector who is exclusive agent for the French critic's writings, informs us that he has received the manuscript and expects to make satisfactory terms with publishers soon. The book was written after Panassie's trip to this country several years ago.

Other new books on jazz, reported to be in work, include one by Ralph Berton, the record commentator on radio station WNYC, and Max Margolis, one of the sponsors of Blue Note Records.

NEW COMMODORE RECORDS RELEASED

Commodore "Classics In Swing" issued over the summer included four piano solos by Joe

Artie Shaw and Charlie Barnet; their new horn men are, respectively, Roy Eldridge, Hot Lips Page and Jonah Jones.

Meanwhile it was announced that Cootie Williams, who left Ellington last year to play with Goodman, will not renew his contract. Cootie is to have his own band.

Hot musicians continued to quit the music business for more lucrative endeavors. Albert Nicholas, New Orleans clarinetist whose last steady job was with the disbanded Bobby Burnet outfit, substituted for Buster Bailey in the John Kirby band while Bailey was nursing a broken hand. Then Nicholas took a steady job on New York's Eighth Avenue subway system.

George Brunies threatened to go into the delicatessen business, but returned to his job with Marsala after a short leave; Elmer James, former Henderson bass man, is now a salesman for Brown Bomber bread, and Wellman Braud has taken over a poolroom in Harlem, although he still plays occasional gigs.

O'Neil Spencer is now drumming for Louis Armstrong instead of John Kirby, and there are rumors that the whole Kirby band may blow up.

Art Hodes opened at the Pepper Pot, Greenwich Village, September 24, and is set there indefinitely. Hodes' quartet has Tony Otovegio, clarinet; Jimmy Rich, guitar; and Porter Van Camp, bass.

Albert Ammons and Pete Johnson went on tour last May with Count Basie's Orchestra. Meade "Lux" Lewis and Joe Turner, too, went on a summer road tour, ending up in Los Angeles where Lewis may do some work for motion pictures. Blues-shouter Turner joined Ellington, playing the Duke's show Jump For Joy in L.A.

Henry "Red" Allen took his band to Kelly's Stable September 5. The group, which features J. C. Higginbotham and Edmond Hall, made its first Okeh records this summer. Benny Carter replaced Allen at Kelly's in late October. Art Tatum is featured as solo pianist at Kelly's.

Bill Davison, Chicago trumpeter who had been working in Milwaukee for several years, is now in New York waiting for his union transfer... So is George Sabback, who led a jazz band at the San Francisco Fair for two years.

Frankie Newton opened at Harlem's Mimo Club October 23, with a ten-man band featuring Vic Dickenson, Mainzie Johnson, and Andy Anderson.... Garvin Bushell takes a six-piece outfit to the Lexington Casino, Philly, November 3.

Louis Armstrong was on the road most of the summer, and will head for Hollywood soon to play his own part in a forthcoming Orson Wells motion picture. Latest reports were that the jazz film, based principally on Louis' life, would occupy only a part of a cinematic variety show planned by Welles. Elliot Paul and Dave Stuart are working on the picture, which should be the most nearly authentic of Hollywood's current excursions into jazz history. Duke Ellington is set to write some special music for it, but it is

Sullivan and four sides by the "Three Deuces". The Sullivan solos were Del Mar Rag — Forevermore and Summertime — Andy's Blues. The Three Deuces (Pee Wee Russell, Sullivan and Zutty Singleton) made The Last Time I Saw Chicago — Deuces Wild and About Face — Jig Walk.

In a September recording session, Milt Gabler waxed four sides by Chu Berry's Jazz Ensemble, to be released soon on Commodore. The band included Chu, Hot Lips Page, Clyde Hart, Al Morgan, Al Casey and Harry Yaeger; the titles are Gee, Ain't I Good To You — On The Sunny Side Of The Street (a 12-inch record) and Blowing Up A Breeze — What's It To You (10 inches).

New U.H.C.A. reissues are King Oliver's Chimes Blues — Canal Street Blues and Mandy Lee Blues — Froggie Moore, and Freddie Keppard's Salty Dog — Stock Yards Strut; all transferred from J.I. Limited Editions in which they were originally issued.

JAM SESSIONS ON SUNDAY BEGIN AGAIN

New York's Sunday afternoon jam sessions will be in full swing when this issue appears. Milt Gabler of the Commodore Music Shop, who conducted the successful affairs last year at Jimmy Ryan's (53 West 52nd St.), was to be back at the same stand October 12th. Harry Lim, who has been running sessions in New York and Chicago for the past two years, was to begin a new series at the Village Vanguard September 28th.

MEADE "LUX" LEWIS ON THE HARPSICHORD

Blue Note Records' only summer releases were two twelve-inch discs, recorded April 9, of Meade "Lux" Lewis playing the harpsichord. Labeled "Variations On A Theme", the sides are subtitled: I. 19 Ways of Playing A Chorus; II. Self-Portrait; III. School of Rhythm; IV. Feelin' Tomorrow Like I Feel Today..."

The new records, planned by Blue Note for a long time, were the first by any jazz or blues artist of note to utilize the harpsichord. Capitalizing on the sharply percussive quality of the instrument, Lewis put to shame the previous attempts of such third-raters as Sylvia Marlowe and Johnny Guarnieri to play jazz and boogie on this antique medium.

SIGNATURE RECORDS ABSORBED BY COMMODORE

It was announced in September that Signature Records, issued by Bob Thiele of

Forest Hills, Long Island, have been taken over by the Commodore Music Shop. The remaining Signature records will be distributed exclusively by the Commodore, and later transferred to the Commodore's own private label.

Included in the deal are two Art Hodes piano solos and four sides by Bud Jacobson's Jungle Kings, issued during the summer; and previous Signature records by Art Hodes' Blue Three and the "Chicago Rhythm Kings". Also transferred to Commodore is Signature's only reissue, Honky Tonk Train Blues by Meade "Lux" Lewis and the Blake-Spand Hastings Street.

"MODERN MUSIC" CONSIDERS JAZZ

Modern Music, quarterly publication of the League of Composers, included an article on "New Orleans Style" in its issue for May-June 1941, among its writings on "serious" music.

The article, by Charles Edward Smith and William Russell, is the first in any classical music publication to describe and analyze jazz in the terms which Jazzmen implied. Modern Music is priced at 50 cents a copy and is obtainable from its publishers at 113 West 57th Street, New York City.

THE COMMODORE MOVES DOWNTOWN

The Commodore Music Shops' branch store at 46 West 52nd Street, a center for New York collectors and musicians since it opened two years ago, closed its doors on October 1st. The stock and staff of the store moved to the Commodore's older location at 136 East 42nd, where business will go on as usual.

THE NICKSIELAND JAZZ BANDS

Nick's, in Greenwich Village, continues as a center of New York jazz activity, in spite of all that has been said against it. Jimmy MacPartland, who opened there last March, continued through April with Pee Wee Russell, George Brunies and Eddie Condon; Mel Powell, Bill Clifton, Joe Sullivan and Dave Bowman played piano at various times. The first drummer, Harry Yaeger, was followed by George Wettling, and Don Carter replaced the latter when he joined Muggsy Spanier's orchestra. MacPartland left Nick's on May 24 after a ten-week run.

Joe Marsala opened at Nick's in July after his Chicago stand, with Marty Marsala, trumpet; Dave Tough, drums; two saxes, and

also rumored that Lu Watters' S.F. jazz band will get a break... Other jazz movies are Paramount's Birth of the Blues (Bing Crosby, Jack Teagarden) and Universal's Cradle of Jazz, with — the Merry Macs!

Lee Collins, who had been leading small groups in and around Chicago, is grooming a new band for the re-opened Cabin Club. Another New Orleans horn man, Punch Miller, left Chicago to go on the road with the Chicago Negro Project band.

After his New Orleans vacation last spring, Jimmie Noone went back to his small combination in Chicago, with Bill Winston replacing Baby Dodds (who joined Laura Ricker at Tin Pan Alley). Noone is now at the Yes Yes Club with Frank Smith, piano, Wallace Bishop, drums, and John Frazier, bass. The theme of Ravel's Bolero, incidentally, is a Noone riff — according to the Chicago Daily Tribune's columnist June Provines, who asserts Ravel heard Noone in Chicago in 1928.

Hot musicians who died recently include Jelly Roll Morton, one of the great figures of New Orleans jazz (in Los Angeles, July); Frank Melrose, noted Chicago pianist and follower of Jelly Roll, (in Chicago, September); Caspar Reardon, harpist.

Clarinetist Bud Jacobson has been hidden behind a continuous floor show at the Blinking Pup, Chicago.... Boyce Brown left Earl Wiley's trio to organize a quartet of his own at the Club Silhouette.... Lonnie Johnson continues at Square's Lounge ...Coleman Hawkins brought his small band into Dave's in Chicago on April 11, continued there with Omer

Simeon on clarinet, and other local musicians.

Mel Powell joined Benny Goodman as pianist in June, replacing Johnny Guarnieri... Bill Coleman was playing in the trumpet section when Andy Kirk opened at the Famous Door in September.... Clarence Profit's Trio was also featured at the Door. Both Kirk and Profit have left.

Eddie Heywood's trio continues at the Village Vanguard with Eddie on piano, Ernie Powell, reeds, and Keg Purnell, drums... Elmer Snowden, veteran NY leader, is at the Samoa Club on 52nd Street with a trio...Adrian Rollini's trio plays at Dempsey's... Leonard Ware's quartet continues at George's... Loumell Morgan's trio relieved Red Allen at Kelly's; the new relief outfit (with Benny Carter's band) is the King Cole trio.

Joe Grauso, drummer, hired trumpeter George Enlow to fill out his small band at the Ideal Spot, Forest Hills, when Rod Cless left to join Marsala.

Muggsy Spanier's large band, after working a few road jobs during the summer, opened at the Arcadia Ballroom (New York) in October. Muggsy's new drummer, replacing Wettling, is Don Carter.

Bobby Hackett joined Glenn Miller after leading how own ten-man band in Boston last spring.. Yank Lawson, trumpet, and Moe Zudicoff, trombone, joined Bob Crosby last July... Billy Butterfield left Goodman to play trumpet for Artie Shaw again.

Paul Robeson recorded Joe Louis Blues (lyrics by Richard Wright - music by Count Basie) with Basie rhythm. When Tough left he was replaced by Danny Alvin.

In August, Joe turned the group over to his brother Marty (and showed up in September at the Ritz-Carlton, Boston, with a new combination). Marty brought Rod Cless, former Muggsy Spanier and Art Hodes clarinet, to take Joe's place. At the beginning of September the line-up was: Marty, trumpet; George Brunies, trombone; Charlie Queener, piano; Earl Murphy, bass; Alvin, drums.

In October, Pee Wee Russell replaced Rod Cless. At this writing, the new Marsala band is still at Nick's with Marty, Brunies, Pee Wee, Gene Schroeder (replacing Dave Bowman), Murphy, and George Wettling, drums.

HARRY LIM'S NEW ORLEANS RECORDS

From a trip to New Orleans this summer, jazz connoisseur Harry Lim brought back four recordings by George Hartman's Dixieland combination: Tin Roof Blues, Diga Diga Do, Muskrat Ramble and Jazz Me Blues. Personnel of the band is: Hartman, cornet; Julian Laine, trombone; Leonard Santobi, clarinet; Roy Zimmerman, piano; Lloyd Dantin, guitar; Johnny Castaing, drums.

Collectors who heard test pressings reported that the sides were excellent. Lim hoped to issue them, but has not decided on any definite label.

THE H.R.S. RAG SUSPENDS

The H.R.S. Society Rag, which appeared in July 1940 and was published monthly, suspended publication after its issue of March 1941. The Rag's subscribers were informed that unforeseen circumstances forced the suspension, but that publication would be resumed early this Fall. The magazine's editor, Heywood Broun Jr., is among the collectors who have been conscripted. He entered the army early this summer.

SWINGING ON THE BRASS RAIL

A highspot in Chicago for small hot bands with name value, this spring and summer, has been the Brass Rail. In March, Bud Freeman came from New York and replaced Wingie Mannone at the B.R. with a Chicago combination. The line-up included Mickey Traisci, trumpet; Bill Doehler. alto: Harry Hinde, piano; Paul Liddell, bass.

Freeman was succeeded in May by Joe Mar-

(Continued on Page 90)

JUNE CLARK

THE STORY OF A FORGOTTEN GIANT

by Herman Rosenberg and Eugene Williams

"A wonderful trumpet; in his time nobody could compare with him. I couldn't say too much about June." Steve Wright, veteran New York drummer, speaking.

"I'd put June in a class with Armstrong and musicians of that type. He was too satisfied with where he was, though. Four men were in his class: Louis, June, Rex and Louis Metcalf, all tops in that division at one time. June was hell on balancing a section, taking first parts, 'got off' plenty and usually took charge." So says Hot Lips Page, himself a fine trumpet.

"He was somewhat on the style of Freddie Keppard, but not too much. He had a nice swing to his playing, and good ideas. June had a wonderful idea of Freddie's playing, but he didn't pick it up from Freddie although he may have heard him when he came to New York with the Creole Band from New Orleans." That's the opinion of Buddy Christian, oldtime New Orleans banjoist, who played with June in New York.

"Outside of Louis Armstrong, June was doing in 1925 what all the trumpeters are trying to do today. What he was playing then would be modern now." That's from Joe Garland, tenor saxist and an ace arranger today.

Surely June Clark's is one of the strangest careers in jazz music. An outstanding jazzman of New York's roaring twenties, he played one of the most exciting horns of his time, according to the testimony of musicians who knew him. Besides the four statements above, scores more could be quoted.

Yet two years ago, when June entered a sanitarium for pulmonary diseases, he had been completely forgotten by the biographers of jazz. Only a few clues remained: the name itself, hardly ever mentioned, and a vague but brilliant reputation. Now, after more than a year's investigation, we can tell June Clark's story for the first time.

* * *

On March 24, 1900, Algeria Junius Clark was born in Long Branch,

The authors are indebted to the following for information included in this article: June Clark, Fernando Arbello, Louis Armstrong, George Beall, Perry Bradford, Buddy Christian, Herbie Cowans, Will "Splivy" Escoffery, Marie Fitz, Willie Gant, Joe Garland, Edmond Hall, James P. Johnson, Theodore "Puss" Johnson, Hoyte D. Kline, Alton "Slim" Moore, Morris Morand, Marlowe Morris, Hot Lips Page, William Russell, Charlie Smith, Willie Smith, Elmer Snowden, Alphonse Steele, George A. Taylor, Joe Watts, Clarence Williams, and Steve Wright. All interviews were conducted by Herman Rosenberg, while the information was collated and edited by Eugene Williams.

New Jersey. His schoolmates, who included Sonny Greer and Bobby Martin, called him "June-bug"; which, after a time, became just "June". In 1908 the Clarks moved to Philadelphia, where June joined a boys' camping group and learned to play a bugle.

He liked it so much that he got a 75-cent instrument and used to sit on the back steps of his home, blowing like mad. June had been studying piano and music with his mother, a member of their church choir. When she heard the bugling, which may well have been a little nerve-wracking, Mrs. Clark persuaded the church trumpeter to give June 25-cent trumpet lessons. She bought the boy a "cornopia" (an E-flat rotary valve cornet), which he played with other neighborhoood boys in the Hodcarriers Brass Band while this first teacher, Wallace, was grounding him firmly in musical principles.

The leader of this brass band, which used to practice in a dingy court at 17th and Lombard, was a hodcarrier named Evans, a man with old-fashioned musical ideas who took a stick to the boys when they tried to jazz the tunes. June used to play baritone horn, instead of cornet, on the march, so he could be near the sidewalk and flirt with the girls while they admired his baritone obligato in Onward Christian Soldiers.

During summer vacations, while still at high school, June went to work on the Pullmans; first as a dishwasher in the dining cars, later in the Pullman service proper. He took his horn along, and used to sit in with the bands along his route.

He went to New York, of course, and toured the Harlem hot spots: the Dolphine, Connors', Barron Wilkins', and Daddy Woods' on 135th Street where Mamie Smith was singing. In New Orleans, he heard many fine musicians among whom he remembers banjoist Ed Williams, Buddy Petit, Jimmy Palao, Bill Johnson, and "Musical Tramp" Turner, who played every instrument.

In 1917 June worked on a troop train, which passed through Chicago on its return trip. Here he heard Joe Oliver for the first time, playing through the Loop on a truck during the Liberty Bond drive. Chicagoans, who had never heard that kind of music (in daylight, at least), went wild. And so, in his own way, did June. The seventeen-year-old decided he wanted toplay that kind of music. And he says today that though he heard and liked Keppard in New York (as Buddy Christian suggests), he took his own pattern of cornet playing directly from Joe Oliver.

As a railroad worker, June had been exempt from the draft. After the Armistice, he entered the music business in earnest. On his first job he went to West Chester, Pa., as cornetist and chorus boy with S. H. Dudley's tent show. Another member of this outfit was James P. Johnson. They toured the T.O.B.A. circuit, passing through Baltimore where Perry Bradford told June about the Okeh company's recording dates for colored musicians, then newly begun in New York.

In Chattanooga, early in 1920, James P. and June quit the show with Lee Baxter, trombone. The three of them went to Toledo, Ohio, where they worked first at Benny Goldstein's cabaret and later at Herman's on Lafayette Avenue. A young trombone player named Jimmy Harrison, who was working across town, used to come in to Herman's to jam, with drummer Jesse Baltimore from his band. This was June's first meeting with Harrison, who was to become one of his closest friends, and who (according to one of their fellow bandsmen) learned a great deal of his music from June as well.

At the end of 1920 June's grandfather died, and June returned to Philadelphia for the funeral. Then he started "windjamming" in the Green Dragon Cabaret, 19th and Nordain Streets, where Ethel Waters was singing. Later he went to work for three months at Jack Duncan's Cabaret on 16th and Lombard.

A colored singer of this period, Josephine Stevens, sang at Duncan's. She took June to New York, where he accompanied her on an Okeh record date (with Willie "The Lion" Smith on piano; two of the titles were Bleeding Moon and Love's Lament. Then, around the end of 1921, Stevens worked for a month at Jim Williams' cabaret in Newport News, Va. The band she took with her had June on cornet; Claude Manley, piano; Bob Fuller, clarinet; and Puss Johnson, drums.

From Newport News, Josephine brought June back to New York and into Edmund Johnson's cabaret, at 132nd Street and Fifth Avenue, where he worked for almost a year with pioneer trombonist Herb Fleming, fiddler Bill Hegamin and Ginger Young, piano.

In 1922 June used to go to rent parties with Fats Waller. Among the party piano players was Willie Smith, and June would sit in with him. June soon joined the Lion's band, with Buddy Christian on banjo, and played at such spots as Connors', Leroy Wilkens' and the Oriental Theatre. June had tremendous endurance at this time; he used to blow all night long, the Lion recalls, and could take sixteen consecutive choruses without tiring.

Later in the same year, June went along with The Lion, Valaida Snow the girl trumpet player, and George McClennon in Will Masten's "Holiday in Dixieland" show, which toured the Keith circuit in Chicago, Detroit and Canada. June, who was musical director, conducted all-white pit bands all along the route.

It was in Chicago that he went to hear the Oliver Creole Band at the Lincoln Gardens, and became friendly first with Joe Oliver, later with Louis Armstrong. June, who revered the pop-eyed New Orleans veteran "like a father", used to sit back of the stand with Papa Joe, about six feet from Louis, while Oliver hummed the tunes (Da Da Strain, Tiger Rag) for his young admirer.

Here June watched the famous two-cornet breaks as they were produced. During the number, Joe would blow a phrase for the next break, softly. Louis always caught it and when the time came, hit it on the dot with Joe. These Lincoln Garden sessions taught June Oliver's phrasing and breaks; June himself emphasizes that Oliver, the first great cornetist he ever heard, had a deep influence on him.

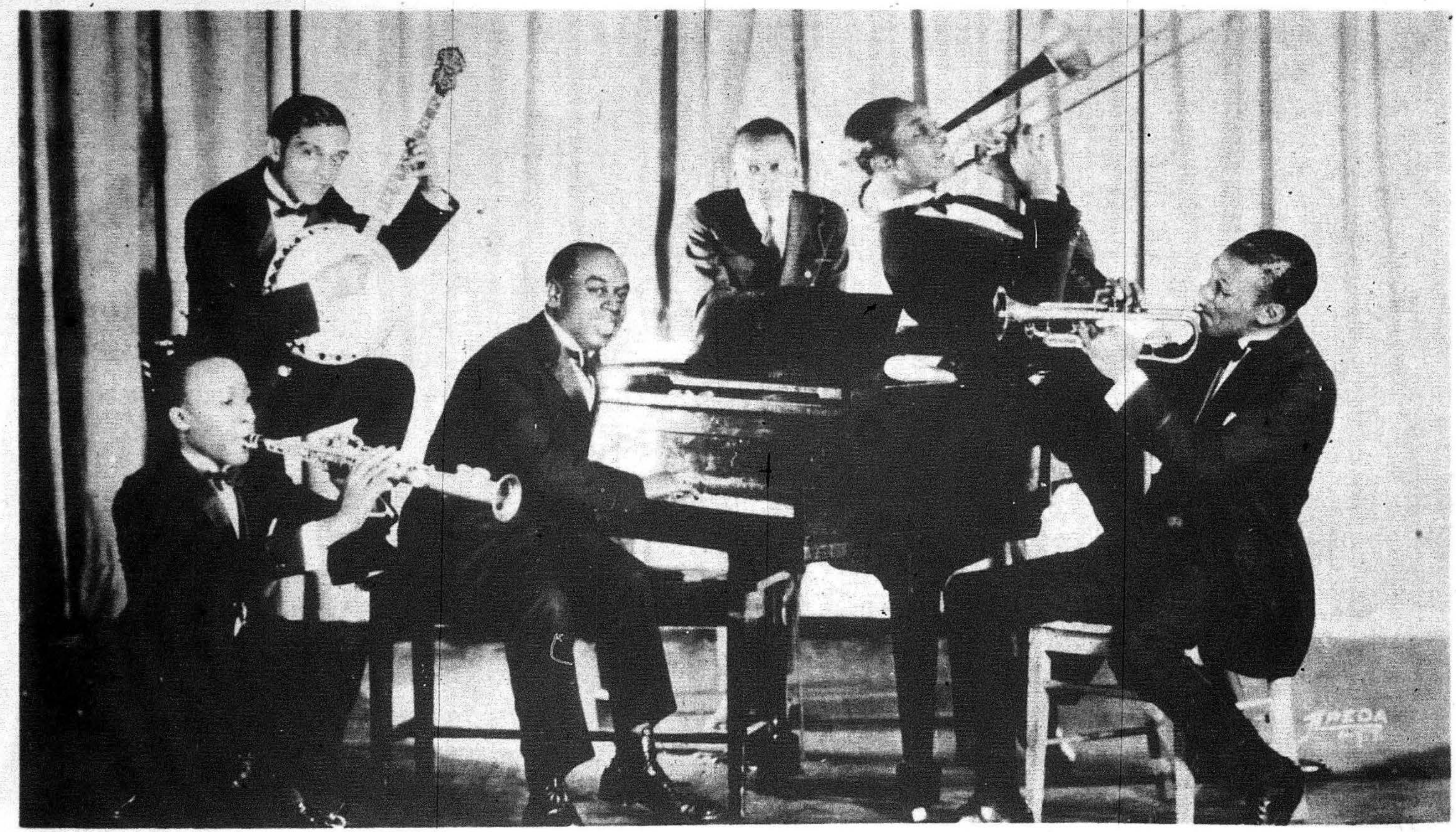
June had heard a lot about the young second cornetist, Louis Armstrong, too; and Louis had heard of him. So they got acquainted and found they had so much in common, besides admiring each others' playing, that they became good friends. That this friendship grew stronger through the years, Louis' letters to June at Otisville Sanitorium attest. At one time they went around together so much that June, whose bass voice has a timbre much like Louis', even got to talk exactly like him.

"Holiday in Dixieland" ended in Detroit, stranded. The Lion hopped back to New York, while June got as far as Flint, played one date and pawned his horn. Working at the Buick factory for three months, he saved his money carefully and got the cornet out of hock.

After a short job with a small band at the Arcadia Dance Hall, June was left flat again. He went to see his friend Jimmy Harrison, who was in town with a vaudeville act. Jimmy fixed it up for June to join the show shortly afterward, in Kalamazoo, and he played the whole middle western circuit. When the show finally closed, at Proctor's 23rd Street in New York, June took Jimmy to live with him at his uncle Fitz' on 142nd Street. They were ready to crack the town.

In 1923 Charlie Smith, a pianist, led the band at Ed Small's cabaret, on Fifth Avenue and 134th Street, the forerunner of today's Small's Paradise. First Jimmy, then June, went there to sit in with the band. June was so popular, and his playing and personality so effective, that after the last set he was asked to join the band as leader.

After a few changes, the group included June on cornet; Jimmy, trombone; Stone, alto and clarinet; Will "Splivy" Escoffery, banjo; Charlie Smith, piano, and Joe "Jazz" Carson, drums. June and Jimmy originated a new style for the band, which musicians of all



JUNE CLARK WITH PERRY BRADFORD'S RECORDING ORCHESTRA, 1925. Left to right: Gene Kennedy, alto and soprano saxes; Will Escoffery, banjo; Charlie Smith, piano; Bradford; Jimmy Harrison, trombone; June Clark, cornet. Photo (originally made for General Phonograph Company) by courtesy of Perry Bradford.

kinds and colors came to hear. Taking a leaf from King Oliver's book, June used to write in breaks which he cued during the vocals. Visiting musicians would try to guess what break was to be played from June's cue; each break was different, and the vocalist might sing twenty or thirty choruses.

In the summer of 1925 Ed Small let the band go to Saratoga to work for Isaiah Jackson, a friend of his, during the season. This was a first out-of-town job for June's new alto player, Benny Carter.

On Labor Day June took the band back to Small's, with Carter still on alto. When he left, after a few months, June and Jimmy sent ticket money to Louisville, Kentucky, for Len Fields, a promising sax man. The new six-piece outfit was the most exciting band in New York, and Fletcher Henderson, Louis, Don Redman, Hawkins, Buster Bailey and others from Smack's band, the Duke and his men and Charlie Johnson's boys used to come to Small's to hear it. Fats Waller, Count Basie, Bernard Addison, Chick Webb, and Johnny Hodges were among those who used to sit in fairly often.

At this, the climax of June's career, came the first sign of trouble ahead. The young cornet star had been living and playing his own way, perhaps without much thought of the future. In the late fall of 1925, June cut his lip and injured his teeth, shooting for the high F's at Small's. He had to stop playing for three weeks, lost heart and took the band out in December. For the next few weeks they were out of work, and it was during this time that Perry Bradford used the band on his recording dates.

Then June and the band took a fresh start at the Palace Gardens, between 139th and 140th Streets on Seventh Avenue (also known as Dunbar Palace and the Bamboo Inn). Fletcher Henderson was hired as an extra attraction on opening night, with his name and June's up in lights and the place jammed with musicians and bandleaders. The new line-up was: June, Jimmy and Len Fields; Harrison Jackson (a prominent Harlem lawyer today), tenor; Charlie Smith, piano; Buddy Christian, guitar; Bill Benford, bass; and "Jazz" Carson, drums. They had a successful run until the end of March, when Federal agents closed up the spot.

June took the same band on the Fox Circuit with Danny Small and his wife. They wound up at Fox's City Theatre on 14th Street, where James Hogan heard them and signed June to work at his Tango Gardens Dance Hall, on 14th Street between Third and Fourth Avenues.

This was June's first venture into a field which, besides the uptown night spots and the vaudeville circuits, often kept the Harlem musicians of that day in bread and butter. Some of the finest colored musicians have been hidden in these dance halls and schools, scattered all over downtown and midtown New York. Hogan had another place called Joyland, at Fourth Avenue and 14th Street, where the band included Rex Stewart, Ward Pinkett and Cuffee Davidson. June used to go from one place to another and play with both bands, which were under his name at one time. On special occasions the whole Tango Gardens outfit alternated at Hogan's Tango Palace, up on Broadway and 49th Street, making the hurry trip by subway or car. But they made such a hit at the Gardens that another band was hired for the Palace, and June stayed downtown.

There was a radio wire at the Gardens, and Jimmy Harrison used to do his Bert Williams imitations on the air. Frankie Newton was playing at the Diana Ballroom, only a few doors away; and on Sundays, when the windows facing 14th Street were open, June tried to blow Frankie out — until he got a summons for playing too loud. After that the windows stayed closed.

There were a number of personnel changes during this stay at Tango Gardens. When Charlie Smith quit, June got Count Basie, who stayed for a month and was replaced by Joe Turner. Jimmy Harrison left to join Fletcher Henderson and was replaced first by Charlie Green, later by Joe Williams. Bernard Addison replaced Christian on guitar, and was in turn replaced by Splivy and Raymond Mayo. The Cotton Club Orchestra wanted Len Fields, so June traded him for Joe Garland. Others who played this job were Prince Robinson, Castor and Ted (Jobetus) McCord, Leon English, saxes; John Trueheart, guitar; Gene Kennedy, tenor sax; Al Duconge, trumpet; Billy Taylor, bass; and Ovie Alston, trumpet.

Joe Garland gives us an impression of June at this period: "I know him as being one of the best musicians of his time. June would take time out to sit down and talk to a fellow about bettering his position, and give him pointers about playing and how to conduct himself on the stand. He was a very conscientious musician, and would play till he fell out.

"No matter how bad a musician was, June would spend hours with him if he showed any ambition; he preferred to take inexperienced musicians, in order to mold them to his own way of playing.

"What I like most about June, outside of his musical ability, is that he liked to argue, and no matter how heated the argument became he always kept it on a friendly basis. The band would be playing a tune and June would stop it in the middle, to show a guy his point of the argument..."

And from Louis Armstrong, then playing at the Plantation in Chicago, came another testimonial. He sent June a $160 Harry B. Jay trumpet, the same kind that Louis himself used: a long cornet, or half trumpet and half cornet.

Early in 1927 June's band finished at the Tango Gardens, and the leader went to work with Carroll Boyd's orchestra at the Monterey Club (the former Kentucky), on 49th Street between Broadway and Seventh Avenue, replacing Duke Ellington. After a few weeks Boyd left and June became a leader again, billed as June Clark and his Rag Time Band.

Besides June on cornet, this group included Ted McRae, tenor; Charlie Holmes, alto; Lloyd Phillips, piano; Scott, bass; Furman Tapps, guitar; and Alphonse Steele (replaced by Mainzie Johnson), drums. Joe Oliver, in town with his ill-fated Dixie Syncopators, came to hear this band rehearse and to wish June luck.

When the band finished at the Monterey in the summer of 1928, June returned to vaudeville. He directed a colored unit and eight-piece band, with Harry White on trombone, for Shubert's "Just A Minute". After a trial opening in Springfield, Mass., the show played in Boston for three months, moved to Newark and ended at the Empire Theatre in New York. While working at the Empire, June doubled at the Monterey again until that club burned down late in 1928.

In May, 1929, June went back to Hogan's Tango Gardens with a band which included Fernando Arbello, trombone and co-arranger; Furman Tapps, guitar; Len Fields, alto; Herbie Cowans, drums; and others. That June was still an impressively powerful musician at this time is proved by Arbello, who says he "had the most terrific chops; he played for seven hours and at the end would be hitting high F and G with ease. The man played strictly jazz. And he was the swellest guy to get along with — modest, unassuming..."

This job, like the previous Tango run, was fairly steady, and saw numerous changes in the band. When Edmond Hall joined it for a short time in 1930, it included June, Arbello, Ted McRae, Arthur Ford on piano, Cowans, and Bass Edwards.

Leaving the Tango for good, June took his band to the Bluebird Dance School, on 42nd Street between Broadway and Seventh Avenue, for three months. According to Cowans the band had six men again: June, Len Fields, Arthur Ford, Tapps, Elmer James on bass, and Cowans himself on drums.

After the Bluebird, hard times had really come. The band broke up, and June played gigging dates with various outfits for about two years. In 1932 came a job at the Oriental Dance Palace, on 63rd and Columbus, with Alphonse Steele, Arthur Ford, Jimmy McLin and others. Later June played for about a year in Furman Tapps' band at The Circle, 59th and Columbus, with Steele and altoist Pete Brown.

In August 1933 June went out on the road with Mae West's "Constant Sinner". In Washington, a few months later, the D.A. closed the show. June went back to New York and gigging. Early in 1934 he was playing with Geechy Fields, Howard Scott, Danny Barker, Morris Morand and others in Wen Talbot's relief band at the Cotton Club. Morand, the drummer, tells us that June was "a good gutbucket trumpet player. He could blow as loud as anybody at that time, and the boss always wanted June to play solo. He was a swell fellow, with a smile for everybody. Always carried his mouthpiece with him and kept blowing into it, to keep his lip in trim. He played piano too, mostly for amusement. He used to be crazy about gin, carried it in a medicine bottle and would sip it all night; but he was no drunkard. Customers used to ask to have June featured, and he liked to play; so it was mutual."

From March to October, 1934, June played in Pennsylvania: first in Harry Marsh's band at the Memphis Club in Philadelphia, then with pianist Al Moore at Pop Cleve's in Chester. Back in New York that Fall, he and Cosy Cole played a week at the Apollo as anchor-men with Valaida's all-girl band. In December, he played a few weeks at the Empire Ballroom with a band led by one Reynolds, a bass player. Slim Moore, who played trombone in the same group, gives evidence that June was past his prime; but "you could tell he had been a great cornetist by the riffs he played, and his swell tone."

In February, 1935, June went back to Philadelphia because of his mother's illness. He played in a Reading roadhouse for a few weeks until his mother died. Then he returned home and stayed there all summer, working in a pit band for Cab Calloway's show one week, and also for a while with New Orleans clarinet veteran George Baquet.

About this time, June heard that Louis Armstrong's orchestra was coming to Fay's Theatre for a week. He prepared a room in the house his mother had left him, and Louis lived there with June for about a month. They took in all the Philadelphia night spots, and Louis tried his best to cheer June up. Louis, who had been trying to keep his weight down, suffered a set-back from eating June's batches of black-eyed peas and hogmaw, eaten at two in the morning.

In November, when Louis opened at Connie's Inn (later the downtown Cotton Club) in New York, he brought June to New York as his guest. One day they went down to Muck's, where Louis bought June a new horn and they both had special mouthpieces made. "Go on now, June, blow that horn," Armstrong said.

The chance to blow that horn again came with a three-month stand at the Red Pirate on 134th Street and Seventh Avenue, with a trio. Marlowe Morris, pianist on this job, thought June was "a good hot trumpeter and a swell guy."

From here June went to the Quogue Inn out on Long Island, where Vance Dixon was working. He took the Red Pirate trio with him. But the job was bad, and the musicians had to live in a made-over stable. June couldn't keep the men, because of the living conditions. Prince Robinson, Joe Watts, Ernest Meyers and others passed in and out of the band. Finally June himself quit, in August 1936.

In October he joined Charlie Skeets' band, at Phil's Cafe in Brooklyn, and stayed there until March, 1937. A few months later, June again became Louis Armstrong's guest, this time for a tour through New England.

The next two years were taken up with gigs in and out of town, while June's health became progressively poorer and his finances often ran dangerously low. His last appearance was an ironic one: using an assumed name, he appeared with a washboard band on one of Major Bowes' radio Amateur Nights. They were good enough to rate a place with one of the Bowes touring units; but June couldn't go along.

By this time his weight was down

from a former high of 165, to 145. On August 24, 1939, Louis and June spent the whole night out celebrating. The next day Louis drove June to the Municipal Sanitorium at Otisville, where he has been ever since. He had to give up his horn; but he played piano in the band and for services, gave piano lessons to other inmates, and produced shows. Forty - five pounds heavier and completely recovered, June will leave Otisville at about the same time this story reaches print. He's not sure what he's going to do: but he'll try to play his horn again, and hopes to write orchestrations. He may even take up string bass.

But no matter what he does, a host of friends will be happy to see June Clark back in music, where he belongs.

* * *

June Clark's story should have been told long ago. The proof of that is not only the story itself, but the exceptionally high praise June gets from the musicians who heard him play. If we knew nothing more about him than this, he would still be a very interesting and important figure.

There is something else, though: recorded evidence of June's playing. He made a good many records during his early career. None of these were known when this investigation was begun. Some were obscure, on others June's presence had not been reported.

Unfortunately June, like many other musicians, has a poor memory for recording dates. The records weren't important; it was the night-by-night playing that counted. So there are only a few records on which we can be sure of hearing June play — and those are vocal accompaniments, from which it's hard to form an idea of his ability.

There's the vocal duet by Sara Martin and Clarence Williams, with accompaniment by Clarence Williams' Blue Five: I'm Gonna Hoodoo You and Your Going Ain't Giving Me The Blues, on Okeh 8270. According to June, the band included himself on cornet, Jimmy Harrison, trombone, Len Fields, sax, and Clarence Williams, piano.

To AUNT Nellie
'GREY'
FROM June
& Ray
5/15/41

Photo from Clark

JUNE CLARK

At Otisville, May 1941

Released early in 1926, this record may well have been made after June injured his lip at Small's. Yet the cornet, or as much of it as can be heard behind the singers and other instruments, is good enough to have been mistaken for Louis by many collectors. Actually June's playing doesn't resemble Armstrong's closely, except in a few isolated phrases. Oliver was his mentor, and there's evidence of the sharper tone and more pronounced mute that King Joe used.

But the brief, and poorly recorded, instrumental passages here serve only to show that June was, obviously, a good cornetist. How much more than merely good he was remains to be seen from other records, still to be investigated. A third side from the same session (but not identified by June) was released on Okeh 8283. It's What More Can A Monkey Woman Do? by Sara Martin, accompanied by Clarence Williams' Blue Five.

One of the illustrations on

these pages shows a Perry Bradford recording band with June, Jimmy Harrison and others from June's own band. This group made Okeh records, probably accompanying Louise Vant, which have not been identified; the back of the original photograph was stamped "General Phonograph Corporation". Bradford himself thought that the same group might have recorded Charleston, South Carolina and Hoola Boola Dance for Paramount, but June did not confirm this suggestion.

According to James P. Johnson, June is to be heard on If I Were Your Daddy and He Took It Away From Me, by Lavinia Turner with James P.'s Harmony Seven, on Pathe-Actuelle; also on other Johnson accompaniments made for Hytone and other labels.

June also recalls making Papa De Dada and Santa Claus Blues (with Clarence Todd vocals) for Pathe; and a recording of Keep Your Temper with Jimmy Harrison, Buster Bailey, Prince Robinson, Buddy Christian, Bill Benford, Willie The Lion, and "Jazz" on drums. The latter side June thinks was made for Columbia in 1925.

According to Clarence Williams' information, a Pathe record of Santa Claus Blues and Keep Your Temper featured June, Jimmy Harrison and Bailey. This record has not been identified, but is probably what June remembers. The recording of Papa De Dada may be the Perfect 15387 (master 110200), by Clarence Williams and his Orchestra. If so, June is also to be heard on the coupling, Baby Won't You Please Come Home (110201) and on Hot Lovin' (110199), on Perfect 15403.

Probably there are other records —possibly better ones — on which June Clark plays cornet. These will be found, and the above-mentioned ones investigated further, only by the co-operation of collectors and musicians who agree with us that June Clark deserves a much better break than he's gotten.

And that's all that has been found about June's records, except the Josephine Stevens date mentioned in the text, and an Ellington date (Soliloquy) for which June played second horn.

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GRANDFATHER OF HOT PIANO . . .

James P. Johnson

by Ross Russell

James P. Johnson, often called the "grandfather of hot piano", is a discouraging subject for a biographer, which may explain why he has been overlooked so often by critics and historians of jazz. Jazzmen failed to mention James P. once in its 300-odd pages; and this could hardly have been the intent of the editors of that excellent book, but rather the difficulty of tying him in with the tradition.

Unfortunately Johnson never rode a coal cart in his life. He never played piano in a whore house, got expelled from Austin High, experimented with cigar-box guitars, purloined a beat-up trombone from a pawn shop, or even fiddled with the instruments on a riverboat. The facts are definitely against him.

Johnson was born and grew up in New Brunswick, New Jersey, and that is a far cry from Storyville. For his first instrument he had to go no farther than the parlor of his own home, and for a first teacher, his mother. He came by his music and his medium of expressing this music logically, naturally, almost casually. That he achieved his successes with a minimum of frustration and deviation is perhaps a tribute to his innate genius; and the fact is yet more amazing when we see that his creative talents were constantly being threatened with complete obscurity by a tremendously active and successful career in the field of colored commercial music.

He was born February 1, 1891, a contemporary of the New Orleans giants who were to fashion the first principles of jazz just after the turn of the century. His mother, a fair amateur musician, taught him to play a rag on the parlor upright as soon as he was old enough to manipulate the keys. When that had been committed to memory she taught him another, and after that stomps, more rags, and a few blues.

At the age of nine James P. was apprenticed to a local piano teacher for regular lessons. Here Johnson got a real break. The teacher, one Bruto Giannini, was an old country musician, a strict disciplinarian, a man of scales and exercise books. Somehow this Giannini possessed the good judgment not to meddle with his new pupil's natural bent. James P. was allowed to play his rags and stomps, but with an important innovation — only after the fingering had been corrected.

Looking back, Johnson is happy about this strange apprenticeship with the old-school maestro who helped him give form to the still crude material. Along with correct fingering, Giannini taught the boy harmony; enough, at least, to augment a splendid natural ear and unlock and technical mysteries which popular music might hold. So equipped, James P., just entering his teens, took the cold plunge into the sea of professional music that was then beginning to lap at the shores of Manhattan.

His first full time job was that of "piano kid" at Barron Wilkins' cabaret in New York. Here he played the popular stuff of the day, seasoned with liberal doses of ragtime, Here he met and became intimate with one Charles L. "Lucky" Roberts. Roberts, a whimsical maniac, had a considerable reputation as an entertainer and "eccentric pianist".

Photo from J.P. Johnson

JAMES P. — A PASSPORT PHOTO, 1923

Roberts' influence made itself felt during Johnson's formative period, leaving its deepest impression in the brilliant right hand which marks the grandfather's style even now. But this was mere keyboard showmanship, a fact which Johnson recognized and wished to remedy. He wanted a solider, more two-fisted style than Roberts' and, gigging around the big town, he found his answer in the work of one Ablaba, a bordello "professor" who, according to James P., had a left hand like a "walking beam". This was the inspiration for James P.'s walking bass.

During the teen years Johnson, worked steadily at various bright spots, satisfying the patrons, and at his own style, expanding and tightening it so that by the time of the great jazz boom he was able to emerge a full-fledged virtuoso.

Immediately following the epoch-making Reisenweber stand of the Original Dixieland Jass Band, Johnson took advantage of the boom. With Shrimp Jones, Nelson Kincaid, Ford Dabney and others, he formed a band and bid successfully on the Clef Club job. This combination, fronted by and featuring Johnson at the keyboard, made a long stand at the Clef and helped establish the reputations of most of the men in it.

When the date finally expired, and the musicians drifted away to organize bands of their own, Johnson decided to explore a fresh medium, that of vaudeville. Here he found himself in competition with a popular feature of the four-a-day circuit in Professor Benjamin Harney, billed as the "Outstanding Exponent of Ragtime Piano". Johnson accepted the challenge and after a single season had overhauled Harney in popularity. He played the circuit for several years, finding time meanwhile to launch hit tunes of his own composition such as Mama's and Papa's Blues and the still durable Stop It Joe.

Swinging back to New York City and the Palace just after the Armistice, Johnson heard of a new field, one which was soon to feel the full force of his talents. Colored musical comedies, tailored for roadshow consumption, were usurping the place of minstrel companies. Johnson talked his way into the musical directorship of an elaborate production to be known as Dudley's Smart Set. After writing many of the lyrics and rehearsing the numbers, Johnson went on successful tour with the show, covering much of the South and West. 1920 found him back in New York again.

James Reese Europe had just returned from the Continent and was reorganizing the old Hell Fighter band for domestic exploitation. Europe asked Johnson to take over the piano. This offer, combined with his own urge to play live music once more, was too much for James P. to ignore. He accepted, and the Europe band went into the Clef Club for a long engagement.

During this period James P. made his first player piano rolls for Ampico and Aeolian. In 1921 he was approached by the larger QRS company and signed to make the rolls exclusively for them, as a "race" feature alongside the rococo but immensely popular efforts of Phil Ohman and Zez Confrey.

So far Johnson had never waxed a phonograph record. But this was soon to come, for the phonograph companies had tapped a field larger than that reached by the pianc rolls. Once the O.D.J.B. platters had tested public receptivity, Confrey and Johnson were won away from the QRS concern. Victor soon advertised solos by each in its ever-expanding catalog.

Jimmy's first Victor pressing was Bleeding Hearted Blues. The popularity of this record, probably the first piano solo on wax, is attested by other releases which followed in 1922 and succeeding years on Okeh, Columbia, Brunswick, Black Swan, and other competing labels.*

Important as these items are to discographers, they were merely side lines with James P. Now he can scarcely remember how many sides he made, or when; he is frequently confronted with something he knocked off one afternoon in a recording studio and has never heard since. When Alfred Lion and I talked to him at his home in Jamaica, Long Island, he had completely forgotten about Harlem Strut, for instance, and was still anxious to acquire copies of the far commoner Brunswicks.

At that time record dates were merely a useful source of side money, just like song royalties. In fact, James P. was better known as the composer of Original Charleston, Ivy, I Can't Give You Anything But Love, etc.; than as the virtuoso of Brunswick's Jingles. Most of these tunes were workaday products tailored to suit the needs of colored revues, for Johnson was still active chiefly in this field. He also did skits and lyrics for production shows at Connie's Inn, for Ziegfeld, Carroll, Schubert, and the Cotton Club. One of his road shows, "Plantation Days", did so well in America that it was booked for an extended tour of Europe, and Johnson was several months on the road in England and the Continent.

Back in America once more, Johnson was attracted to Hollywood by a lucrative offer to do the musical scores for the motion picture production Yamacraw, starring Bessie Smith. He had already done a great deal of work with Bessie, as tunesmith and accompanist both on the road and for record dates.# After his scoring had been accepted, he remained in Hollywood long enough to play a supporting part in the picture.

It is quite impossible to keep up with James P. during the roaring Twenties. In fact, as he says, he did well to keep up with himself. There was always something to absorb his interest and manifold talents. A new show to be rehearsed. Two more sides for Columbia. A short engagement as band pianist. A recording date with Ethel Waters or Roy Evans.** A jam session at the Rhythm Club, where men like Ellington, Tatum, Hopkins, Fats and the Lion spoke of "going to get their lesson" from the grandfather. The Louisiana Sugar Babes date for Victor. Giving Fats, James P.'s boy, a brush-up lesson. Another show in production for the road. To Hollywood for a Warner Brothers short. Another celluloid role, this time for Pathe. Sitting in uptown with Bix and Tram and Louis. A four-week engagement as featured soloist at the Savoy. House rent parties and chitlin' struts.

Here was a man with vitality and personality, and besides that ability and perhaps not a little genius. A man who knew everyone, and worked hard and got his kicks and saved a little money. Looking back, we are interested mainly in the man's music — his records and the influence of his piano — but these things were no more than threads in a larger pattern.

We wonder how his records and his piano managed to escape the taint of commercialism, how he a-

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* See Hot Discography. Probably the best solo example of Johnson's work is Snowy Morning and All That I Had Is Gone, Columbia 14204.

# His best known accompaniment is the beautiful Bessie Smith Backwater Blues, Columbia 14195.

** With Ethel Waters, Handy Man, etc. With Roy Evans, Syncopated Yodelin' Man, another remarkable accompaniment; all for Columbia.

Photo courtesy of James P. Johnson

JAMES P. AT HOME — 1937

voided becoming a bizarre medley of Confrey, Gershwin and Irving Berlin, how the slender threads in the disorganized pattern came to acquire lasting form and color after the rest of the picture had blurred off.

Jimmy wonders himself. If he succeeded in salvaging something of value from the hectic, too successful career, he believes he owes it to his unflagging interest in after-hours music. At his busiest, he still found time to play at a house rent party or a jam session. A man with tremendous vitality can relax at activities which exhaust another. So James P. went uptown to let his hair down and get his kicks; and the field of jazz music is permanently enriched by his efforts.

The fall of Wall Street marked the end of this fabulous decade. Out, with the G notes and the bootleggers and the It girls, went jazz music. Or rather, jazz went underground. And Johnson went home — to the two-storey house he had purchased in the middle class suburb of Jamaica. He was fortyish, growing a little fat and a little bald. He took up pipe smoking and became quiet and philosophical. He slowed down, yes; but he had no notion he was through.

During his career he had been a pianist, entertainer, performer, composer of popular tunes, director of musical comedies, amateur actor, dean of the 88 among the jazz select. But one endeavor had eluded him, piqued his curiosity, challenged his ability. As a busy foreign correspondent might long for leisure in which to write a serious novel, Johnson had dreamed of trying his hand at serious composition.

The Yamacraw scoring had sharpened this growing interest and the Thirties finally found Johnson in a position to make a start. Gershwin's attempts to work jazz material into more serious form seemed imperfect to Johnson. Without conceit, he thought himself in a more advantageous position to succeed where Gershwin had failed — or rather, had managed to please only dilletantes.

The great library of jazz music, of blues, rags, stomps, fox-trots, popular songs, had a vast wealth of material to offer, Johnson thought. He wanted a form of music which would give more lasting permanence to this material than the transient four-four, 12- and 16-bar structures. So, in the quiet of his home, he sat down at the fine grand piano he had acquired, and began his work. He had a big, tough job ahead. He is still at it, and expects to be as long as he lives.

The first serious effort was Tone Poem, begun in 1930. In 1932 he completed Symphony Harlem (four movements: Subway Journey, Song of Harlem, Night Club, Baptist Mission). St.Louis Blues, an elaborate improvisation on the Handy classic, followed in 1936. More recently he had been working on the most ambitious job yet, an opus tentatively entitled Symphony in Brown, which intended to trace out the rise of jazz music.

The success of these challenging endeavors remains to be seen. Eugene von Gronna used Symphony Harlem for the Negro Ballet, produced at the Lafayette Theatre, New York, in 1927. There have been other performances since then. But this music finds itself poised between righteous jazz on the one hand and classical music on the other, subject to all manner of prejudice and suspicion. And it has never been easy for a new composer to interest important men in the classical field with their creations.

If Johnson's story ended here, many hardshelled jazzophiles would be inclined to shake their heads, and lament the passing of another one-time great. This judgment might be defensible had James P. remained in complete retirement. Fortunately, his selection as pianist on the important Panassie Bluebird dates of 1939 (Mezz Mezzrow Orchestra; Frankie Newton Orchestra) and more especially, his subsequent recording work, have furnished evidence to the contrary. James P. plays a mellower piano these days, but it has lost nothing in the opinion of this writer.

The two opening choruses on his Decca Stop It, Joe (Rosetta Crawford) show that here is still the piano with more pure swing than any other in the business, not excepting Hines or Waller — and that with a minimum of effort, with greater economy than ever before. Here is no faded relic or dated exhibit, no tricky musical scholar or effete, meretricious Gershwin. Here literally, freshened by the latest acoustical advances, is the true Grandfather.

After all, a guy who remained a top-flight musician while he was being all things to all people in the music business, ought to be able to fluff off any softening influences of composing for full symphony. And maybe those more recent and most ambitious efforts will be the bridge, or the foundation for the bridge, between this incredibly rich native music of ours and the more timeless classic forms.

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JELLY ROLL MORTON ON RECORDS

by

Hugues Panassie

Jelly Roll Morton, 1885-1941

Ferdinand "Jelly Roll" Morton died in Los Angeles on July 10, in his fifty-sixth year. A great musician and a strikingly unusual personality, Jelly Roll never received in print the full measure of appreciation which his stature deserved. His claim to be the originator of jazz brought hoots of laughter when they were first published; but the laughter has diminished as an increasing number of jazz lovers came to realize what a truly important part Jelly Roll had played in jazz. At the same time, an increasing number of collectors has joined the countless jazz musicians who always considered Jelly's best records among the classics of jazz. Hugues Panassie's analysis of these records, written a year ago, is here published for the first time as a partial tribute to the memory of a great jazzman.

Jelly Roll Morton is one of the great figures of jazz music. It is a joy to see that after having been unjustly forgotten, he has received his proper recognition during the past two years. It is very fortunate, too, that the Victor company has reissued many of Jelly Roll's records; for along with King Oliver's Gennetts and Okehs, Louis Armstrong's old Okehs and the Jimmie Noone Vocalions, they are the best jazz recordings of the New Orleans small-band type.

Jelly Roll is a first-class composer; besides Duke Ellington I don't know anyone who has written so many charming and attractive tunes. He is also one of the best pianists I ever heard. People call him "corny" because there are traces of the ragtime era in his music. But this ragtime accent does not prevent him from swinging to the utmost and creating the most colorful and delicious choruses. His touch is extremely sensitive, and reveals a musician full of emotion.

Morton recorded a lot of piano solos, but unfortunately the majority of these is unavailable today. I have not even succeeded in hearing them all. The most beautiful of these recordings is perhaps The Pearls, a delightful tune of his own which created a sensation among musicians. This number was recently recorded for Decca by Mary Lou Williams, but she did not play it with the proper feeling. Jelly Roll Morton interprets it in a much lighter and more charming way.

Available on Bluebird 10257 are Fat Frances and Pep, two fine piano solos, much better recorded of course than The Pearls and the other older waxings. The music however, is not as amazing. As for the solos recently issued by General Records, I have not heard them yet.

Let us come now to Jelly Roll's band records. I'll stick to the Victor-Bluebird waxings, for they are the best and almost the only available ones.

The first sessions all took place in Chicago, and the band was: George Mitchell, trumpet; Kid Ory, trombone; Omer Simeon, clarinet; Jelly Roll Morton, piano; John St. Cyr, banjo; John Lindsey, string bass; and Andrew Hilaire, drums. Titles were Black Bottom Stomp and The Chant (Bluebird 10253), Smoke House Blues and Steamboat Stomp (Bluebird 8372), Dead Man Blues and Sidewalk Blues (not reissued but should be, for it features one of George Mitchell's best trumpet solos), Grandpa's Spells and Cannon Ball Blues (Bluebird 10254), Doctor Jazz and Original Jelly Roll Blues (Bluebird 10255), and Someday Sweetheart (not reissued). A few musicians were added to those mentioned above, for some of these sides; but their participation is rather unimportant.

With the exception of certain parts which are nicely arranged, these records feature mostly solos and improvised ensembles with the classical New Orleans balance between the trumpet, clarinet and trombone. The music, on every side, is almost constantly magnificent. This is not surprising, for all these musicians are first class players; if I am not mistaken all are from New Orleans, which explains the perfection with which they perform this type of music.

George Mitchell, who deserves much more popularity than he has, is perhaps the most solid New Orleans hot trumpet player, after Louis Armstrong and Tommy Ladnier, among the generation of musicians born around 1900.* He sounds very much like Louis and Tommy, and sometimes recalls the sweetness of tone of Joe Smith. Mitchell does marvels with the mute, and nobody should miss his performance in Cannon Ball Blues, when he plays the blues with the deepest feeling, or in Doctor Jazz and Original Jelly Roll Blues, where he plays with terrific attack and swing.

Kid Ory may be considered an old-fashioned musician, but he is my idea of a good ensemble trombone player for this kind of music (just as he was the right man for Louis Armstrong's Hot Five Okeh records). As for Omer Simeon, almost everyone agrees that he is a wonderful clarinet player. In ensemble improvisation, he knows perfectly how to make the clarinet part come out, playing biting high notes which seem to swing the whole band. He is especially exciting in the last ensemble choruses of Cannon Ball Blues and Doctor Jazz. These two sides, incidentally, are probably my favorites among all those mentioned above.

The rhythm section is worthy of the soloists. John Lindsay plays great bass in all these sides, and John St. Cyr is perfection. I have still to discover a jazz guitarist providing such a beautiful background, for he is just as rich in his harmonies as in the supreme ease of his swing. Listen carefully to his part in Cannon Ball Blues and Original Jelly Roll Blues, and tell me if it is possible to play better than he does.

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* Actually George Mitchell was not from New Orleans; see Wesley M. Neff's article in this issue. — Editor's Note.

The next sessions also took place in Chicago, in June 1927. The band was: George Mitchell, trumpet; George Bryant, trombone; Johnny Dodds, clarinet; Stomp Evans, alto sax; Jelly Roll Morton, piano; John St.Cyr, guitar; Quinn Wilson, tuba, and Baby Dodds, drums. Titles were: Beale Street Blues and The Pearls (Bluebird 10252), Wild Man Blues and Jungle Blues (Bluebird 10256), Hyena Stomp and Billy Goat Stomp (not reissued but should be, in spite of the "billy-goat" effect, for Johnny Dodds' clarinet part is really gorgeous).

These records are quite as good as the former; the same spirit presides over the performances. Mitchell swings powerfully all through Beale Street Blues, in which Johnny Dodds takes one of the blues choruses of which he alone has the secret. Baby Dodds' drumming, and Quinn Wilson's tuba playing, also deserve high praise. The execution of The Pearls is beautiful, and an interesting comparison to Jelly Roll's piano solo of the same number. As for Stomp Evans, despite a few bad moments he fits well within the band.

After these records were made, Jelly Roll went from Chicago to New York, where all his later sessions took place. The first, in June 1928, almost reached the Chicago standard. The band was: Ward Pinkett, trumpet; Geechy Fields; Jelly Roll Morton, piano; Lee Blair, banjo; Bill Benford, tuba; and Tommy Benford, drums. Titles were: Shoe Shiner's Drag and Boogaboo (Bluebird 7725), Kansas City Stomps (Bluebird 7757), and Georgia Swing (Bluebird 8515).

Kansas City Stomps undoubtedly is one of the finest of Jelly Roll's records. The tune, typically New Orleans, is taken at a perfect tempo, and Omer Simeon's clarinetting is lovely throughout. I should like to draw special attention to Simeon's part in the last ensemble chorus, in which he starts with a grandiose outburst, creating an absolutely exquisite melodic line. It is seldom that such clarinet playing can be heard on records. The tuba work is wonderful too, and I feel inclined to think that few musicians could equal Bill Benford. The rest of the band is good enough. Ward Pinkett, though far from equalling Mitchell, plays the right style.

Georgia Swing features one of Simeon's best clarinet solos in the low register, including a few phrases which Teschemacher used from time to time and which he probably borrowed from Simeon.

From this time on, for some reason or other, Jelly Roll did not use such uniformly excellent musicians; and his later sessions are far from as good as all those mentioned above. There were still some excellent players, but others were not good by comparison. Also, some arrangements were used which were not always of the best kind, nor satisfactorily played. So I am not going to say much about these records, except that Albert Nicholas played some pretty clarinet on some of them, Strokin' Away for example. One of the sessions (Mississippi Mildred, Jersey Joe, etc.) was made with the men from Luis Russell's band: Henry Allen, trumpet; J. C. Higginbotham, trombone; Albert Nicholas, clarinet; Will Johnson, guitar; Pops Foster, string bass; Paul Barbarin, drums; and, of course, Jelly Roll Morton on piano instead of Luis Russell. The results could have been excellent. Unfortunately Henry Allen, who plays almost constantly on the four sides, ruins them by a very vulgar, overexuberant and displeasingly emphatic part. This proves that it may happen that a man born in New Orleans is not for that reason bound to play New Orleans style. These records would have gained 100% if Mitchell had taken Henry Allen's place.

I must also mention the trio records (clarinet, piano and drums) which Jelly Roll made during these years. The first were made in Chicago in 1927 with Johnny and Baby Dodds: Wolverine Blues and Mr. Jelly Lord. The latter is a delightful tune in the Baby Won't You Please Come Home vein, and it features some of the most beautiful piano playing Jelly Roll ever put on wax. Not only are his solos superb, but he contributes a sort of counterpoint to Johnny Dodds' clarinet features which is quite phenomenal. Both sides have a very peculiar sound, owing to fact that Johnny Dodds plays in the low register exclusively.These sides were reissued on Bluebird 10258.

A single trio side, *Shreveport*, was made in New York in June 1928, with Omer Simeon and Tommy Benford (now available on Bluebird 7710). Simeon, I think, considers it his best record; and certainly it is one of those that really do him justice. Here again is a characteristic New Orleans tune featuring a lot of magnificent low-register clarinet, although this time the first chorus and the second part of the last are played in the high register.

In December, 1929,the last four trio sides were made: *Smiling The Blues Away* and *Turtle Twist* (Bluebird 10194), *My Little Dixie Home* and *That's Like It Ought To Be* (not yet reissued, although it deserves to be),with Barney Bigard on clarinet and Zutty on drums. *Turtle Twist* is one of Jelly Roll's loveliest tunes. Barney performs it with the most touching feeling, and Jelly Roll provides a rich and imaginative background. The piano solo, full of melody and nice harmony, is also a gem. In the other three sides, although Barney and Jelly Roll play well enough, Zutty really steals the show with his unbelievable drumming, alternating terrific breaks on the snare and bass drums with superlative cymbal work: he swings to the utmost when he rolls on the snare drums.

To sum up, Jelly Roll was extremely successful with all his trio records. It is through them that he gave us a large part of his very touching music. And it is not useless to note that he had this trio idea long before Benny Goodman's Trio, which was presented to the public as an innovation, and which always remained far below the Morton Trio's performances.

After this period (towards the end of 1930), Jelly Roll stayed away from recordings for about ten years. Only at the end of 1939 did he come back to the studio to make eight sides for the Bluebird label: *High Society* and *I Thought I Heard Buddy Bolden Say* (Bluebird 10434), *Didn't He Ramble* and *Winin' Boy Blues* (10429), *Climax Rag* and *West End Blues* (10442),*Ballin' The Jack* and *Don't You Leave Me Here* (10450).

For the first four sides the band was: Sidney De Paris, trumpet; Claude Jones, trombone; Albert Nicholas,clarinet; Sidney Bechet, soprano sax; Happy Caldwell, tenor sax; Jelly Roll Morton, piano; Lawrence Lucie, guitar; Wellman Braud, bass, and Zutty, drums. For the other four the same personnel was used, except that Fred Robinson replaced Claude Jones on trombone, and Bechet was absent.

These are fine records,although not as perfect as Jelly Roll's best efforts. This is partly due to the fact that the band is too big, at least in the first four titles, and partly because some of the men were not at their best, especially Happy Caldwell. I am convinced that the records would have sounded better without Happy. But Zutty swings wonderfully, Jelly Roll shows by his background work and his solo in *Climax Rag* that he has lost absolutely none of his qualities, and above all, Albert Nicholas plays some fluid, light and supple clarinet, which is a joy for the ear. In *High Society*, when Bechet and he play the celebrated Picou clarinet chorus in turn,he sounds at least as good as Bechet - which means a lot. The best side of the session with Bechet is *Didn't He Ramble*, a lively interpretation which has more drive than the other numbers, and in which Bechet and Zutty especially shine. Sidney De Paris plays well too, but these records don't show him as the great trumpet player he really is.

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* M. Panassie does not mention *Mournful Serenade*, made at the *Shreveport - Shoe Shiner's Drag* date by a quartet including Geechy Fields,Omer Simeon, Jelly Roll and Tommy Benford; now reissued on Bluebird 8515.
— Editor's Note.

PANASSIÉ AFTER FIVE YEARS

by Walter Sidney

It is more than five years since Panassie's *Le Jazz Hot* appeared in English translation before the American public. It was a noteworthy event. At that time hot jazz was still taken too much for granted by public and critics here, one of the queerer aspects of our local color.

The realization this book brought of how great an impact jazz had made upon Europe, from the lay public to the most eminent composers and musicologists, had powerful repercussions. Along with the success of Benny Goodman's insistence upon hurling blues music at the "commercial" public and the appearance of John Hammond's newspaper articles, it brought a turning point in jazz history.

Looking at the book now, we find its scope and ambition still astounding. Flocks of books and magazine articles are appeared since, yet not one has even attempted what Panassie did: not only a study of jazz origins and styles, the special character of its music, but a thorough, bold evaluation of its production, a chart of the peaks and valleys of the music itself.

Hobson's *American Jazz Music* was a fine beginner's introduction. Sargeant's *Jazz Hot and Hybrid* was a technical study which made some very illuminating points, but was far too dogmatic in its conclusions, based on far too skimpy a knowledge of the actual richness and variety of jazz music. The Smith and Ramsey *Jazzmen* was a much needed study of history and backgrounds, but with few exceptions it avoided a study of the records themselves, taking a "Who-are-we-to-tell-you-what-to-like" attitude. Panassie's book remained unchallenged in scope. And that is why a whole generation of collectors and converts were brought up under the wing of *Le Jazz Hot*; that is why the book is still eagerly read. It fills a need that nothing else supplies.

Examining the book from the standpoint of our knowledge today, there are large gaps. The most important is the wholly mistaken approach to New Orleans music. To Panassie, New Orleans music was a "style", and a more "primitive" version of Chicago style. Its only special and distinguishing characteristics were that the clarinets played a lot of notes and the trombones played in a rough and to him, disagreeable manner.

It is easy to see why Panassie should have fallen into this error. His knowledge of jazz, at the time the book was written, was based largely on records, mostly "Chicago style" and arrangements. He had no opportunity to hear the music as played in its own native surroundings. Consequently he took the records he heard as the summit of jazz, and the "jam session", the "hot solo" and the "arrangement" as its basic forms. Knowledge of origins and beginnings were largely supplied by records of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, and primitive beginnings they certainly seemed to be.

What we know now is that the White Dixieland music heard on records was actually a thin reflection of a very great music that was played in New Orleans: a truly national and people's music, based upon the familiar stock of blues and rags, immensely varied and growing directly and in the most natural way out of the life and needs of the people.

Little of this music was known on records when Panassie was writing his book. Even now, we owe our knowledge of this music largely to Jazzmen, to some early King Oliver and Armstrong records, to the blues accompaniments (hardly mentioned in Le Jazz Hot, and to the "re-creations" since, such as the Jelly Roll Morton records, the New Orleans Jazz Album, the Kid Rena records, the Muggsy Spaniers and the recent Bechet series. Yet there is no doubt now that this is the basic music of jazz, and little doubt that it is the greatest: that it furnished jazz with its finest melodies, its best improvisational and ensemble patterns. Compared to the easy, free and natural improvisation and ensemble of the greatest New Orleans music, its flow on and off the beat, its expressive melodic lines, so simple in basic phrase, so extraordinarily complex in final result, both Chicago style and the music of the ordinary "jam session" seem strained and over-refined, except when illuminated by the genius of a Teschemacher.

So it was with the "too many notes" of the New Orleans clarinet style. We know now that this is the perfect rag style, its floridity wholly in character with the music, becoming outmoded as a style only when the rags became outmoded. Certainly no jazz lover would want to give up such music as the traditional High Society and Tiger Rag solos, or Omer Simeon's work in Black Bottom Stomp. This kind of clarinet playing is as unbeatable in its own medium as it would be out of place in a modern jump band.

And so it is with the "primitive" New Orleans trombone. It does not produce a very brilliant solo style, but within its own music it is perfect, and a source of endless pleasure. Any doubts about how well the "old style" trombone still sounds, about how much it has in drive, percussive power, and ensemble strength that the later styles lost, may be settled by listening to George Brunies going to town with any good small group (as the Muggsy Spanier, Art Hodes and Jimmy McPartland bands were, alas!).

Not being pointed towards New Orleans music, Panassie missed many hints that he could have found. He took a typical "Chicago" and "jam session" approach to the melody itself. To him works like Muskrat Ramble, Dipper Mouth, Clarinet Marmalade and Gutbucket Blues were simply tunes of the same order. as Sugar or I Got Rhythm or The World Is Waiting For The Sunrise, raw material for hot solos. He did not see a significant and fundamental difference between the first group and second. The latter were sheet music tunes, meant to be plugged as songs, playable "hot" or "sweet". The former were basic jazz conceptions, arising from the folk music of jazz itself, permanent creations, positing a definite style, a definite form, a definite place both for tradition and improvisation.

Not realizing the significance of the blues as the source of jazz scales, beat and intonation, he floundered when he came to define the "hot" style, and at the same time gave too much credit to single individuals for the creation of the hot jazz style. He writes about Armstrong almost as if he created the entire hot style out of thin air, with perhaps a little help from King Oliver. Actually it is Armstrong's greatness that he combined so well, and built upon, all the best qualities of the basic blues style. And we can know the breadth and greatness of this blues style, out of which Armstrong grew as a great man among many gifted others, not only from the legendary stories of Bunk Johnson but from the recorded work of Freddie Keppard, King Oliver, George Mitchell, Lee Collins, Tommy Ladnier.

To Panassie the Hot Five and Hot Seven records presented a picture of a great man in a very inadequate setting. To most critics now, the splendid quality of these records is due to the unity between Armstrong, Dodds and Ory, the perfect manner in which the contributions of each man merge to create a music greater than the single work of any one of them.

Allowing for such gaps as these, we can have nothing but admiration for the excellence of Panassie's critical taste, the acumen of his judgments. The book is full of highly affirmative statements, yet the author is rarely to be found out on a limb. There are very few records he praised which do not have real quality. His enthusiasm for Armstrong, Hines, Ellington, Teagarden, Bix, Ladnier,Joe Smith, Tesch, has been underlined by the years.And the weaknesses he pointed out in the work of such men as Coleman Hawkins, Joe Venuti, Benny Goodman, Red Allen, marring their many admirable qualities, have likewise been confirmed by time. Considering his necessarily subjective and impressionistic approach, he has unquestionably one of the finest and most discriminating ears among jazz critics.

Also important to him was his classical training. We are still accustomed here to snobbishness from the long-hair side of the critical profession. When the Carnegie Hall frequenter condescends to like a jazz record,it is usually a piece of empty virtuosity or semi-sweetness that the true jazz-lover would scorn. In France, however, things were different. Young musicians were in the midst of a revolt against the whole body and form of classical music, experimenting with new instrumental combinations, intricate rhythms, new scales. The strange timbres, cross rhythms and dissonances of hot jazz came like manna from heaven. And Panassie's combination of a love for jazz at its most original, its hottest, together with the conviction that hot jazz belonged fully and unashamedly to the tradition of great music, was a contribution that many critics here are still too slow to accept.

There is a real need for a new book on jazz: one that will take up the job as left off by *Le Jazz Hot*, that of a thorough critical survey of hot jazz on records. The least important task of such a book would be to judge the new soloists and new records that have appeared since. Its broader aim should be to restore New Orleans style and music to its proper place; to study the rise of hot jazz itself, as part of the social life, the vitality, the needs, the imagination of the American people; to chart a course through the thousands of blues and "race" records, as well as the fine old records Panassie omitted; to discuss the blues piano and boogie-woogie, the most new and vital addition to our knowledge of jazz in these past five years; lastly, to take up the pressing problem of how hot jazz is to be rescued from the overwhelming weight of commercialism under which it lies today, how opportunity is to be given for new voices to be heard and new ideas to be worked out.

Such a book would supersede *Le Jazz Hot*, but whoever writes it will have the job of matching Panassie's catholicity, taste and confidence. It is a tough assignment,but it is about time somebody took up the challenge.

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A BIOGRAPHY OF GEORGE MITCHELL

Little Mitch

by Wesley M. Neff

Louisville, Kentucky (in common with many northern cities such as Omaha and Lincoln, Nebraska, and Minneapolis, Minnesota) had numerous colored concert and dance bands as early as the first decade of this century. In all these localities the concert bands were active during the summer in parades, fairs and outdoor concerts, and the dance bands, smaller units drawn from the professional musicians of the concert groups, played in the theatres and for parties and balls of the winter social season.

But the parades, fairs and dances were almost without exception white affairs, and the music played for them consisted of standard marches, concert pieces and white pop tunes. Musically, Louisville seems to have been as far away from New Orleans as Nebraska and Minnesota. It had no jazz music in the New Orleans sense, just ragtime and two-steps, and it is significant that the two most widely known musicians of the twenties to come from Louisville were Charlie Cooke and Fess Williams (the latter was not actually born in Louisville), men who made their reputation in the large-band and arranging fields. They were both thoroughly competent and even learned in the classical phases of the theory of music (Cooke earned a doctor's degree from Chicago Musical College), but conspicuously lacked any trace of "hot" concepts. (Cooke, who even stooped to imitation of the Kansas City Nighthawks at one period, is now on the arranging staff of NBC in New York.)

Wesley M. Neff completed this biography of George Mitchell just before being drafted into the U. S. Army last Spring. He was unable to complete a projected discography of Mitchell.

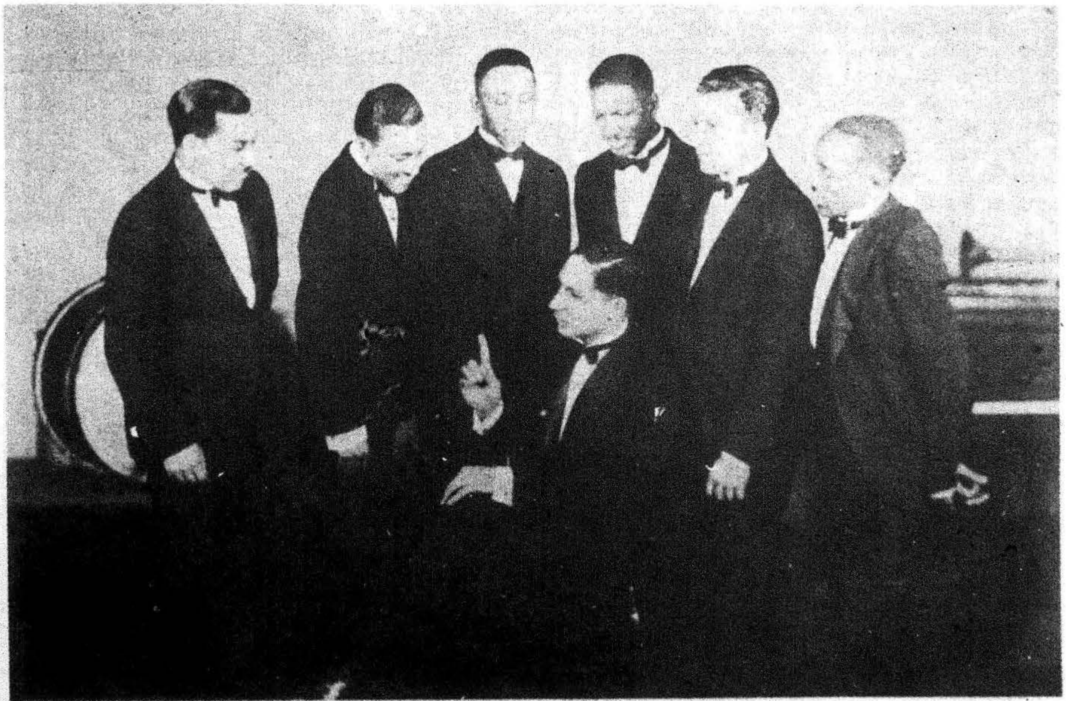
This being the case, George Mitchell, who was born (March 8, 1899) and raised in Louisville, is a paradox; for aside from the influence of one Bobby Williams, to be mentioned later, there is nothing in his early background that can be considered to comprise an adequate environment for the magnificent hot style he was to attain in maturity. This will be apparent from the story.

George grew up in Louisville next door to a lad of the same age named Leonard Fields, and it was the cornet Leonard got from his folks when they were both about twelve years old that was George's first direct acquaintance with the making of music. He was so intrigued with the instrument that he got Leonard's father (who played the clarinet for kicks during evenings at home when George knew him, but who had played a horn in the Louisville Musical Club Brass Band when he was younger) to teach him rudimentary technique and scale for fifteen cents a lesson.

The inference is that George's talent and interest were both manifest indeed, because about a year later his mother, on the gala day of his young life, surprised him with a cornet she had bought second-hand. A widow, Mrs. Mitchell had to support her family of three boys and a girl on her small earnings as a maid; the horn had been paid for over a long period in installments of a quarter each.

When he had owned a horn about a year, young Mitch was able to gain admittance to the brass band composed of members of the church from whose parochial school he was just being graduated. This band played for the church's social affairs. George had played in it but a short time when its leader, Wilbur Winstead, who also played baritone and tenor horn and violin with the Louisville Musical Club Brass Band, thought he deserved a chance with the latter organization.

Mitch made the L.M.C. band, Louisville's standard of band excellence, and remained a member of it until he left Louisville. John Emory, trombone and director, and



GEORGE MITCHELL made his best-known recordings with the late Jelly Roll Morton and his Red Hot Peppers. This 1926 photograph (lent by Morton) shows Mitchell at right, Morton in center. The others are (left to right): Omer Simeon, Andrew Hilaire, John Lindsay, Johnny St. Cyr, and Kid Ory.

John Whickliffe, drummer, were two other members of the L.M.C. with whom he was to be associated:Emory in Louisville and Whickliffe in Chicago.

Soon after George joined, the band gained another new member, a very polished and able cornet-player by all reports.He was Bobby Williams of Cynthiana,Kentucky,who had been on the road playing with circuses and minstrel shows from Texas to Coney Island. Returning to Louisville to live, Williams took an interest in the young George Mitchell. According to Mitch, Williams' coaching was the single influence which molded his style durings its formative period.

For this reason, it is highly regrettable that the only recorded example of Bobby Williams' playing is a test of Ida, made for Victor with Carroll Dickerson's Orchestra, in 1923. The writer has not heard this record, but probably it would not yield much in the way of comparisons; Tubby Hall, in whose possession it is, says that the orchestra was drunk to the point of sloppiness when it was made. We are left in the dark, therefore, on the question of Mitchell's training, except to know that it was good. Bobby Williams is still referred to with great respect, by the older musicians on Chicago's South Side, seventeen years after his death.

Until late in 1917 Mitch played concerts with the L.M.C. band and dances and theatre engagements with Wilbur Winstead's and John Emory's dance bands, professional groups made up of the cream of the L.M.C. Then he left Louisville for the first time and toured the South with a minstrel show. After a year he returned and played with Emory and Winstead again until Bobby Williams, who had gone to Chicago early in 1919 with John Whickliffe to play at the Entertainers' Club (35th and Indiana), sent for him.

Mitch got to Chicago around the end of 1919. Bobby had got him a job at the Club Alvadere, on the second floor across from the Sunset -- the same Alvadere which was later bought by Julian Black and changed to The Nest -- with an obscure four-piece combination of which George remembers only James (Slaps) White, piano. In six or eight months,late in 1920, he went to the DeLuxe to play with Horace Diemer, alto; Tubby Hall, drums; and Tony Jackson of Storyville and Pretty Baby fame, piano.

With Tubby Hall, he left the De Luxe in '21 on a theatre tour of Canada in Clarence Miller's band. George likes to reminisce about ballyhooing their act in such ways as playing in front of the theatres and on chartered street cars.

In 1922 they were stranded in Hamilton, Ontario, but had managed to play their way back to a Detroit cabaret when George's brother sent him carfare to get home to Louisville. After a short time he left again, to play at a dance hall in Milwaukee with Doc Holly, about whom nothing is now remembered but the name.

Early in 1923 he was called to Chicago again; this time by John Whickliffe, who had opened at the Paradise Gardens (35th and Prairie) in the meanwhile but was then at the Dreamland. In the late summer Bobby Williams, who had been playing with Dickerson at the Sunset, died after being poisoned; Mitch took his place. This Dickerson band, which with Williams instead of Mitchell made the Victor test referred to above, comprised:

Carroll Dickerson, violin and leader; Wyatt Houston, violin; Eugene Hutt, Bobby Williams, trumpets; James Berry, trombone; Buster Bailey, Rudy Jackson, clarinet and saxes; Clarence (Chick) Owens, flute and saxes; Henry Gordon, piano; Sterling Conway, banjo; Bill Daniels, bass; Tubby Hall (replacing Andrew Hilaire), drums.

Early in 1924 the Sunset was closed for a year and a day by prohibition agents, and Dickerson got a booking to open the Mah Jongg at 35th and Calumet. When the Mah Jongg closed late that summer (to open later as the Plantation), Dickerson went to the Entertainers' Club until he left for the West Coast in November,1924. Mitch left the band after the Mah Jongg closed, Willie Hightower replacing him,and joined Doc Cooke at Harmon's Dreamland Ballroom at the beginning of the fall season.

While playing with Dickerson at the Mah Jongg, Mitch doubled at the Friar's Inn (which then had three orchestras and almost a 24-hour shift) afternoons, with men he is unable to remember. When he joined Cooke, Jimmie Noone got him to take the place of Freddie Keppard in his smaller combination playing after hours at the Paradise Gardens with Art Campbell, piano; Minor Hall, drums; and John St. Cyr, banjo, when Keppard's attendance got particularly erratic.

During his sojourn at the Paradise Gardens Mitch got the horn he plays to this day. One night Muggsy Spanier came in raving about the Jay cornet he had just bought, which he had brought for Mitch to try. His enthusiasm was so great that Mitch, who was using a trumpet then, played the cornet the rest of the night, was sold on it in turn, and bought one the next day.

The Cooke personnel at this time was substantially the same as that given in the JAZZ INFORMATION Noone discography (Oct. 18, 1940), with Mitchell instead of Keppard. He played with Cooke through the winter and spring of 1925, and continues with him that summer at Harmon's Navy Pier Ballroom. That fall he left to play with Lil Armstrong at the Dreamland Cafe, either Keppard or Charlie Allen taking his place.

Besides Lil and Mitch there was Louis Armstrong (second), who was doubling with Erskine Tate earlier in the evening; Joe Waler, alto; Jimmy Strong, clarinet and tenor; Sudi Renard, bass; and Baby Dodds, drums. It was during this job, which lasted until the Spring, of 1926, that the famous New Orleans Wanderers-Bootblacks sides were made. This is the story behind them:

Lil was approached by Columbia representatives who asked her to record eight original sides. There was no stipulation as to personnel, but Louis was to compose four of the sides. Louis, then under contract to Okeh, was indifferent to the proposition; so Lil composed the tunes, put Louis' name on four of them, rounded up a band (as per George Beall, except that Baby Dodds and Lil are agreed that there was no alto*) and made the recordings. The subterfuge planned by Columbia lay in using Louis Armstrong in boldface as composer of the four sides, thereby capitalizing on his name and inferring his presence in the group. Lil gave him his share of all royalties but didn't escape his wrath when he began to get in trouble through his Okeh contracts. The only harm done finally was to create the general erroneous impression that Louis was on the records.

In the spring of 1926, Mitch took a job with one Roulette at the Jeffery Tavern and continued with him at the Hollywood Barn on the Northwest side, and the Cafe de Paris. When the last spot closed in the spring of '27 Mitch joined Dave Peyton. Roulette's group is of interest only because while he was playing in it Mitch played on Jelly Roll Morton's first Victor session (see JAZZ INFORMATION for, December 20, 1940, pages 13-14). Peyton's personnel in 1927 was: Bob White, George Mitchell, trumpets; James Berry (later replaced by Kid Ory), trombone; Cliff Turner, alto; Cecil Irwin, tenor; Buddy Scott, banjo and violin.

In addition to his regular jobs with Dickerson, Cooke et al., Mitch almost always doubled at late-hour spots such as the Paradise Gardens, where the tips were often greater than the salary attached to the formal connection earlier in the evening. Sometimes this doubling amounted to little more than "pulling doors" with Tubby Hall and a couple of others. "Never ask the man does he want any music, but just pull the door and walk in playin'."

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* See George Beall's discussion of these records in JAZZ INFORMATION for December 20, 1940, page 15. An alto saxophonist can be heard clearly on both sessions; who this was remains to be discovered.

Later in the spring of '27 Mitch replaced Freddie Keppard once more in Doc Cooke's orchestra, now at the White City Ballroom. Cooke's personnel was practically the same as before, except that Billy Butler, sax, was now in the band. This time Mitchell stayed with Cooke for two years, until Earl Hines got him to replace Bob Shoffner in the fall of 1929. The following spring Earl fired him for alleged incompetence, and he was replaced by George Dixon. He was hired back, however, to go on the usual summer tour, completing Hines' first three-trumpet section: Dixon, Shirley Clay and Mitchell. Hines fired him again for the second and final time in the spring of 1931, and got Walter Fuller.

Except for occasional gigs this was Mitch's last connection with hot music. In 1935, in common with Dick Curry, Charlie Elgar's former drummer, and other old timers, he joined the W.P.A. concert orchestra, which plays for music appreciation classes in Chicago schools, inmates of hospitals, etc. He has been in it ever since. And so the cycle is completed: Little Mitch, of the small stature and potent horn, a musician's musician, returned to playing straight again after seventeen years.

The recognition Mitch has received from record collectors only in recent years he always had from other horn players. He'll never play another *Perdido Street*, but much of one's regret is erased when, sitting around Local 208 in the afternoon, one hears what all the musicians who knew his playing have to say. The gist of their comments is that Little Mitch was one of the greatest ever.

SOMETHING KEEPS A-WORRYIN' ME

by Ralph J. Gleason

Always there is something to worry me. One month it is D. Leon the Wolff and the next it is George the Fearless Frazier; one year only my left leg grew and another time I had to listen to Henry Hewes explain 11-bar blues. Always there is something to furrow my brow and spoil my digestion; if it isn't the beer it's the ale, and if it isn't the ale it's the H.R.S. Rag.

This month it's life. Sitting in my room playing records all afternoon to bother the neighbors, I got to thinking. "George," I said to myself (I call myself George in moments of great stress); "George, what is wrong with the world? Here you are, year after year, getting madder and madder at Frazier and it's not fair. Fair to yourself, I mean. Frazier, he can stand your being mad and anyway he doesn't know you, but you — it'll ruin your life. And the worst part of it is that he was *your* baby in the stink-is-a-lovely-word day and age of *Mademoiselle*. You agree with him on some things like the Eberle family, Forrest, Inc., and what a nice guy Milt Gabler is. But Lee Wiley and nostalgia he can keep. Me, if I keep my direction throughout this, I will be satisfied."

Right then I stopped talking to myself. Now it's perfectly all right for a man to complain, but to grouse — no. That Frazier, always grousing. In the big black morning it's one thing but right in the middle of the day it's enough to make one stop reading *Mademoiselle*. And all those lovely *girls too*.

And now for Muggsy. Him, Frazier doesn't keep. Him belong to everybody. Ugh! Muggsy big bands, yes. Ugh! Them he can keep. Lee Wiley he can keep also. But Frazier, I keep. Him I keep where I want him — right between the covers of *Mademoiselle*.

Lu Watters' Yerba Buena Band

by Eugene Williams

Step into the Dawn Club, in San Francisco, most any Friday night. You'll hear a band blowing out the real old jazz with two cornets, a trombone and clarinet — no saxes. The tune might be *Riverside Blues* or *Kansas City Stomps*; *Dipper Mouth* or *Panama Rag* or *Ballin' The Jack*.

But it isn't the King Oliver outfit, which played a few blocks down Market Street twenty years ago (they say you could hear that bunch half a mile away). This is the nearest thing to Oliver you could find, in the year 1941: Lu Watters and his Yerba Buena Band.

The men in the band, like the West Coast boys who call it the best jazz band playing today, prefer to talk about the music as such, avoiding misleading comparisons. But they'll admit that the Oliver band has always been their model. This is all the more unusual because probably none of them (all white, and averaging 29 years old) ever heard the King in person. Their solid jazz background comes from long and assiduous attention to the best jazz on records: the Olivers, Louie's Hot Fives and Sevens, the Jelly Rolls, New Orleans Rhythm Kings and the rest.

The author is indebted to John Beeby, William Russell and Harry Mereness, Jr., for indispensable advice and information.

That doesn't mean it's a record collectors' band. Although some of them are among the country's top collectors, first of all they're professional musicians — and good enough to hold their own in any company. But they're almost unique in their familiarity with the great jazz of the twenties, and their serious intention to follow that tradition.

That's what makes the Yerba Buena Band so significant, not only in itself but as a hint of a possible future for jazz. Too many of the erstwhile ornaments of jazz music have gone on to other things; too many of their followers are scuffling hopelessly for any kind of a living. But while collectors and musicians have been sinking back into the cold comfort of their old records and such pleasure as can be derived from short-lived star combinations, Lu Watters has had faith in jazz. Facing the jazz musician's problem squarely, he got down to fundamentals and built a group that will play band jazz — not swing, not petty jam, no "screamers" — as well as it can.

His idea is not to appeal to record-collecting jitterbugs, whose fickleness and strange tastes are notorious. Let people hear real jazz, played by a real jazz band, and they'll go for it. Not all of them, of course; maybe not even most of them. But enough, perhaps, to let a band, and later a few bands, stick together and play their music.

The Watters repertoire includes an astonishing number of the familiar Dixieland tunes: blues, rags and stomps, played in their complete forms: tunes celebrated among collectors from the Oliver, Armstrong, Morton, N.O.R.K. and Blue Five recordings. At one Dawn Club dance last June, the band played more than fifty numbers, all of them strictly jazz material; and not one pop. When they get other jobs they play pops, too, if the dancers want them. The Dawn Club listeners never do.

Whatever they play, it's with a special regard for the right tempo — never too fast — and with the full brass tone of the great jazz bands. Sometimes there are obvious similarities to the original recorded versions; but the band doesn't try to copy anyone, and their aim is simply to play the way they think is right.

Like King Oliver, Watters has his troubles. He wants to make records with the band, but not until it's ready. The last time he thought they were nearly set, the whole band broke up. He got a new outfit put together; but the draft, promise of steadier work elsewhere, and other distractions have forced further changes from time to time. Steady piano players have been hard to find, too.

Along with a constantly shifting personnel, Lu has had to use as few as five men, or as many as ten, on various jobs. For the larger groups he writes arrangements of Oliver or Jelly Roll tunes. But his ideal band has the eight-piece instrumentation of the old Oliver bunch.

He uses a banjo, instead of the popular guitar, for its greater percussive punch and more striking tone; a tuba instead of string bass, for the different sound it gives the band. This rhythm section, plus the brass-band instrumentation and tailgate trombone, helps give the Watters music some of the march beat which jazz had in New Orleans.

The S. F. collectors have been doing their best to pass the word along. Still, the band is hardly known beyond the West Coast. We in the East have only been able to hear a few acetate records, taken off the air and with a short rhythm section, which we're assured don't show the band at anywhere near its best.

These recordings do, however, serve to quash any idea that a band like this might sound stilted. On the contrary, they have a strikingly fluid and genuine ensemble style. Only two soloists seem to be really outstanding: Lu Watters himself and Turk Murphy, the trombone. The other men play capable solos, but their main achievement follows their main goal: to build a good jazz ensemble. As Lu often says, sometimes a bunch of utterly unknown players may unexpectedly happen to feel right and hit it off together, while many "all-star" combinations never get together in the right spirit.

So Lu's men are picked primarily for their ensemble musicianship; something very different from the good dance band man's ability to blend perfectly with three others playing the same instrument. Solo ability is incidental, for it grows out of good ensemble. Turk Murphy can turn in a fine solo, like Ory, Brunies or Jim Robinson. But like them, he excels in playing knocked-out tailgate background with full, brassy tone. With Lu and Bob Scobie, second cornet, he makes the brass section the strongest feature of the band.

Lu Watters himself is an extremely able cornetist who, like all good horn players, idolizes Louis Armstrong. Lu is an extraordinary person in many ways, and his ideas and tenacity are the backbone of the band. But it would take another whole article to tell about him; and it's the band that counts.

The other members of the band at this writing are Ellis Horne, a competent solo and ensemble clarinetist whose style somewhat resembles Johnny Dodds'; Forrest Browne, piano; and Bill Dart, drums. Clancy Hayes, banjo and ragtime vocalist, contributes heavily to the band's popularity. Other outstanding West Coast musicians who have played with Lu at one time or another include Bob Helm and Hank Abramson, clarinets; Paul Lingle and Walter Rose, piano; and Hi Gates, trombone.

The acetates (Ballin' The Jack, Sunset Cafe Stomp, Yerba Buena Strut, Shim-Me-Sha-Wabble, Willie The Weeper, Original Jelly Roll Blues, Riverside Blues, Tiger Rag, Skid Dat De Dat, Struttin' With Some Barbecue, Ory's Creole Trombone, Come Back Sweet Papa, and Georgia Campmeeting) which are all we've heard of the Watters band, are pretty exciting; but we need to know a lot more about this group. Meanwhile, the band is playing at the Dawn Club every Friday night, broadcasting on the job over station KYA. And an increasing number of encouraging reports comes from the Coast. Their gist is that the Yerba Buena boys get the best ensemble sound to be heard today. Which may mean a lot, not only for Lu Watters and San Francisco, but for other men all over America.

There are musicians everywhere, old-timers or unknown kids, who love the real jazz and want to play it. Instead we find them gigging for a living, hopping in and out of name bands, or dishing out commercial music in suburban dives. They have the right idea already; all they need is faith, leadership and an audience. Perhaps they, like the Yerba Buena Band, may yet find these. Then jazz need not be diluted to death.

A NOTE ON WARD PINKETT

William Ward Pinkett, Jr., was born in Newport News, Va., on April 29, 1906. His father, a tailor, played cornet and was an inspiration to his four children, who were all musically inclined.

Ward junior started out on cornet at an early age. He played his first trumpet at the age of ten. While attending local grammar and high schools, he continued his musical education until he was able to join the high school and city bands. He was a student at New Haven Conservatory of Music, Meridian, Mississippi. Two fellow students at the conservatory, both from Newport News and both also now dead, were Harold F. Whittington (trumpet, Fess Williams) and Harvey G. Boone (sax, Noble Sissle).

Little has been known about Ward Pinkett, the man who played such exciting trumpet on some of Jelly Roll Morton's records. Through the courtesy of his mother, Mrs. M. Louise Pinkett, and his sister, M. Loretta Pinkett, we present this brief note on his life. Most of the information was supplied by Mrs. Pinkett, and is published without alteration.
— Editor's Note.

Ward first joined a local orchestra. His first "big" job was with what was then White Brothers' Orchestra of Washington, D.C. Later he moved to New York City, and was connected with Henri Saparo at the Bamboo Inn in 1929. At that time he also played with Chick Webb, King Oliver, Teddy Hill, and several other bands.

Ward died of pneumonia in New York City March 15, 1937, and is

(Continued on Page 90)

The Cavalier

by James Higgins

A young man of intention limped swiftly along a city street at night. Neon signs, like marvelously colored embers, cast green, blue and crimson tints upon the snow which had fallen lightly a few hours before. The young man had money in his pocket. Although it was late, well-wrapped couples still paraded beneath the angry lights. Taxi cabs followed one another cautiously through the street. Feeling the cold burn at his nostrils the young man anticipated; his dreams were those of a medieval traveler who approaches on his journey a familiar and heartwarming inn.

He slipped by darkened theatres, and bars whose windows, through patches where the steam had not elected to creep, disclosed men in the throes of fellowship. He glimpsed portentous bottles. They existed within thick smoke, like trees on a battlefield. No appeal could be made to the young man. It was as if the scenes were looked at from a train window. At regular intervals his breath floated out before him.

A huge illumined signboard hung in the distance. Above it the stars made a pattern like pinpoints pushed through a curtain. There was a white moon that appeared to have been rolled into the sky.

The young man's limp, a very slight one, was a romantic symptom, hinting at combats in which his slim figure had carried itself nobly. But the truth was that he had been born with a defect.

This story was written as a practical answer to those who love jazz and who write badly of it. Neither sentiment nor the emotions have anything to do with putting words together. Jazz is not a romantic phenomenon, to be thus publicized, but an object which must be transferred to paper in exactly the same way as one would transfer a tree, a street fight, an old woman. That is, if the attempt is serious. I'm not talking about Down Beat. J. H.

He arrived. at a corner where there was a shrunken doorman. Under a wonderful, gold braided cap the doorman's ears were phenomenons of redness. This sentinel compared unfavorably with a row of glittering bulbs which announced that he stood guard at the Corinthian Club.

The young man went through twin leather doors that folded behind him. It was a magic entrance. He loosened his coat as he proceeded downstairs to a landing where the way was blocked by an iron gate. A Caliban in a tuxedo, who sat on the other side, stirred to ~~a~~ his feet. There was the sound of a dungeon being opened and the privileged young man continued down the stairs.

He abandoned his hat and coat to a girl in a cubicle, with whom he exchanged the words of those who pass one another on the street every day and have no other contact. As he was turning away she referred to a scarf. A minor disagreement resulted. He suspected that on a certain night he had left his scarf in this place. But she said she had not come across it, and her tone implied significances which the young man recognized. They displeased him. He did not care that he had been drunk or that she or anyone else knew it. And his memory was poor, he admitted it. Often his friends were amazed that he had no recollection of events in which he seemed to have every faculty under control and alert. But if he mentioned a scarf he wished it clearly understood that he remembered the scarf. It was honor with him, ethics.

The room into which he had dropped like a denizen was long, with a low smoke-wreathed ceiling. Engrossed men and women sat at tables that rimmed one side of a little dance floor. A waiter, holding a tray of drinks over his head, broke up a group of idlers at one end of the room by yelling "hot soup! hot soup!" The bandstand, royal and solid blue, occupied a thronelike position behind the little dance floor. There were brass instruments that seemed to have been left in precisely careless positions. At the top of the bandstand, just below the ceiling, could be seen the drummer's forlorn contraptions. They had the vexing and pathetic appeal of a well-set table from which the diners have been frightened. The young man headed down an aisle, gently, a hand in his pocket. On his left the wall was placarded with gigantic photographs of actors and actresses, an attempt by the management to have mural effects without expenditure. There were perpetual faraway voices, laughs, and the crisp tinkle of ice against glass.

The young man came to an area screened by the bandstand, where three bartenders waded within a horseshoe shaped bar. He approached one of them and ordered a drink.

"How'd that thing come out, Marty?" asked the young man.

The bartender's face became gratified and childlike. "It'll be OK. Arthur's takin' care a it fah me."

"He's all right about things like that."

"Aces," declared the bartender, giving his head a positive shake and closing one eye for emphasis.

He placed a gentlemanly drink on the bar. "Maybe I'll be bettaroff than ever," he said. "Ya know -- if the hours don' get me. I'm used ta sleepin' inna daytime."

"Christ," said the young man, "it'll be fine. Very healthy. Best life in the world, Marty." He took a bleak sip from his drink.

Following this mysterious and sincere conversation they discussed other topics. The young man surmised that the club was doing terrific business. This was true. The young man couldn't get over it, in such a town. He doubted that any other club without a floor show could break even. The bartender, agreeing, said it was all on account of the early closing law. He grinned.

"Tha's one thing we don' have to worry about."

The young man said the business they did proved the law was stupid. He damned nameless, granite olympians who were apparently to blame for the law, who had little regard for the happiness or prosperity of the city entrusted to them. The young man spoke with the heat of one personally incommoded.

Other customers threw negligent glances at the young man conversing on even terms with a bartender. They rather envied him. They had vague notions of what celebrity he might be.

All at once there was a burst of merry music. It affected the young man. With multiple gestures he excused himself,and holding his drink carefully at a level with his chin he went around a corner and stood beside the bandstand.

Six musicians, paying no heed to one another, made music in curiously relaxed attitudes. They were contented men. The drummer's face was partly obscured by the smoke which drifted about him, so that his arms, rising and falling monotonously, seemed to be levers attached to sticks. The musicians were seated, except for the leader, a little man with shiny black hair who held a cornet to his lips. The listening young man tapped his foot. His bowed head was attentive, as if he approved, with reservations, of this music.

From two yellow lights on pillars beside the bandstand there came dusty beams focussed on the dance floor. The beams sprayed joggling couples. Once the young man looked up and frowned in their direction.

The piano player carried on alone, with only the rattle of the drums to support him. The leader, turning, caught sight of the young man and raised his hand to his brow, peering sailor-fashion. In reply the young man elevated his drink.These were eloquent courtesies. They bespoke an acquaintanceship in which respect and affection were the principal elements. The young man's face showed a grave expression while the clarinet player, when the piano had done, went on with a solo.

Presently the leader began a cornet solo. His hands clutched the pugnacious instrument.At times it seemed,from his grimaces, that he was in raw pain, and it became necessary to use coaxing tactics with the cornet. At other times he blew imperiously. The music floated forth. The leader mastered this arrangement of golden coils and shafts only by devout concentration upon its feminine qualities. He half closed his eyes, his fingers delicately touched the valves. Behind him the idle trombone player sat in the position of a doll tossed into a corner.

Upon the young man's face there had been kindled a carnal and melodious smile. He presented a wondrous aspect.

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JAZZ INFORMATION

Box 6, Station H, N. Y. C.

● Now Ready -- New Limited Editions ●

NEW LIMITED EDITION REISSUES
(See following pages!)

JAZZ INFORMATION Limited Editions will be sold to subscribers only, and only one copy of each reissue can be sold to each subscriber. They will be sold by mail only; the regular price of $1.00 includes all packing and shipping charges. All orders must be sent direct to the publishers. No C.O.D. orders can be accepted. An order coupon appears on page 51; if you do not wish to cut up your J.I., please read the coupon carefully before ordering, and write plainly.

JAZZ INFORMATION began its series of limited-edition reissues of rare hot jazz classics in December, 1940. There were two reasons for this policy: first, to make available to a larger public the great hot records on Gennett and Paramount; second, to increase the magazine's subscription list. We didn't expect to make money on these reissues, and we were right. Neither have we lost on them; but the tiny margin of profit hardly compensates for the work involved. The Limited Edition reissues could not have been undertaken as a profit-seeking venture.

JAZZ INFORMATION'S general policy — to avoid compromise — was followed in planning our reissues. We chose only those records which, we felt, deserved to be reissued because of their musical quality. This would not have been possible without the faithful readers of J.I., who took us at our word and, in many cases, bought reissues of records which they knew only by hearsay. If any were disappointed, we have yet to hear of it.

The unexpectedly enthusiastic response to our first reissue (King Oliver's Canal Street Blues and Chimes Blues) exhausted our supply in less than one month. Encouraged, we made arrangements to release the same sides to the general public on the U.H.C.A. label of the Commodore Music Shop, and proceeded to plan a series of reissues to be released, similarly, in cooperation with the Commodore. All collectors owe a new debt of gratitude to Milt Gabler of the Commodore, without whose friendly collaboration the plan for a Limited Edition series could never have been carried out. Thanks are due, too, to the many collectors and friends who acted as an unofficial advisory board, and to those who loaned us valuable originals for dubbing. And to Irving Gabler of the Commodore, who shipped our records when we could no longer do it ourselves.

L. E. No. 2 (King Oliver's Froggie Moore and Mandy Lee Blues) was sold out almost immediately after its release in January. The first two reissues are not listed on the following pages; they are now available from the Commodore Music Shop on U.H.C.A. Number 3, the piano solo coupling, was released exclusively on the J.I. label in March, in a larger edition, and so remains available. Number 4, by Freddie Keppard's Jazz Cardinals, is now sold out; but a description of the record is included, since the only previous announcement was by postcard to subscribers.

The ten JAZZ INFORMATION reissues represent, in our opinion, the cream of the Gennett and Paramount hot records. There are, of course, others which should be reissued, and which would have been if suspension of publication had not brought our plan to an end. As it is, the greater number of the reissues were rushed through when it became apparent that J.I. must suspend.

Every subscriber should realize, however, that we have taken a considerable risk in releasing all of these records at one time. We are well aware that they will find only a limited market, in spite of their superlative musical quality.

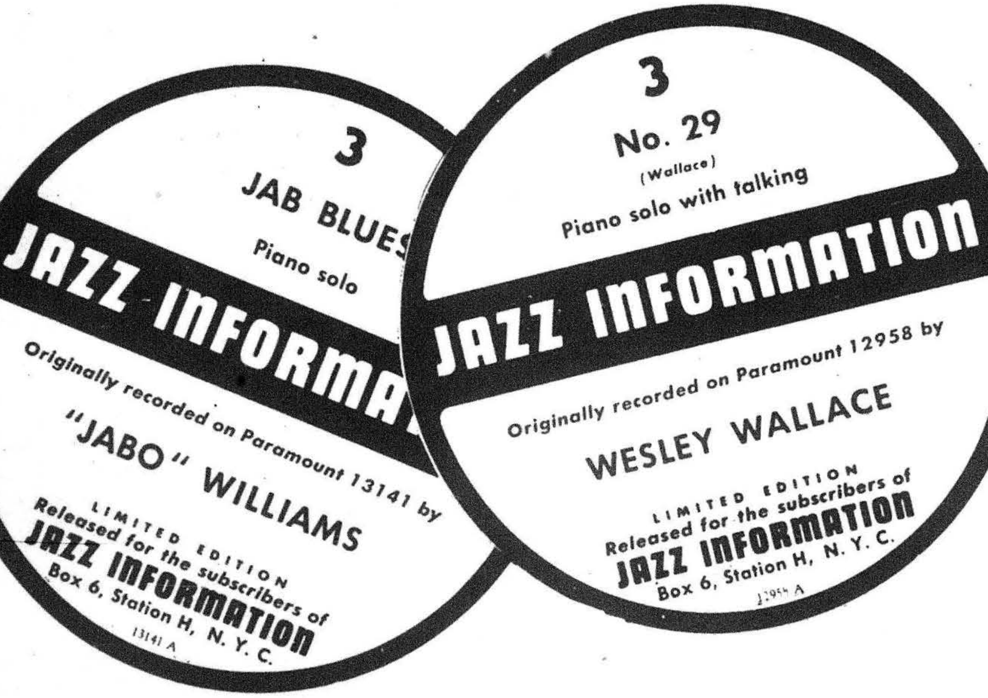
Please note, therefore, that our Limited Editions must be sold out before the sides can be transferred to U.H.C.A.; and that Nos. 9 and 10 can not be released before the reissues now on sale have been exhausted. Please co-operate — and insure not missing any of these great hot records — by ordering your copies at once.

NO SHIPPING DELAYS

There will be no delays in shipping the reissues from now on. The long delay in shipping August and September orders was caused by national defense needs for corrugated paper; but an ample supply of record boxes is now available, and all orders will go out promptly.

3

AVAILABLE TO NON-SUBSCRIBERS. Effective immediately, Limited Edition No. 3 becomes available to non-subscribers. This new policy has become necessary because three times as many copies were pressed of this reissue as of our others. We had planned to keep it on sale, to subscribers only, for a long time; but our suspension of publication makes this impossible. Copies are now available to the general public at $1.00 each. This record will not be repressed on any other label when the J.I. edition (already half sold out) has been exhausted.


3
JAB BLUES
Piano solo
JAZZ INFORMA
Originally recorded on Paramount 13141 by
"JABO" WILLIAMS
LIMITED EDITION
Released for the subscribers of
JAZZ INFORMATION
Box 6, Station H, N. Y. C.
13141 A
3
No. 29
(Wallace)
Piano solo with talking
JAZZ INFORMATION
Originally recorded on Paramount 12958 by
WESLEY WALLACE
LIMITED EDITION
Released for the subscribers of
JAZZ INFORMATION
Box 6, Station H, N. Y. C.
12958 A

Limited Edition No. 3 couples two of the superb and exceptionally rare boogie-woogie piano solos originally issued on Paramount in the late twenties. Only a few of the original Paramount copies are known to exist, and it is with pride that we make this exciting music available to a larger public, perhaps, than it ever had.

Hardly anything is known of Wesley Wallace and "Jabo" Williams, except that they were members of the great St. Louis group of blues pianists. Each made a few sides for Paramount and disappeared. Their history and present whereabouts are as unknown today as were Meade "Lux" Lewis' when collectors first began to talk about his Honky Tonk Train Blues.

Like the Honky Tonk, No. 29 is a "train blues", describing (in words and music) the train which went "runnin' and hollerin'" from Cairo, Illinois, to East St. Louis. The speaker hops the train at Murphysboro and rolls off near the end of the trip. Almost as fascinating as the Honky Tonk itself, though it has an entirely different quality, No. 29 is built on a unique polyrhythmic pattern, with the left hand playing a curious six-note figure throughout. The right hand illustrates the spoken story of the train ride, filling the piece with motion and contrast.

Jab Blues is a piano stomp, played very fast and with amazing vitality and abandon. Williams is content to let his left hand play relatively simple figures while he unrolls a string of impossible tricks with his right. A series of breaks in the Bugle Call tradition enliven this exciting performance even more. For sheer pianistic swing, Jabo's pyrotechnic exhibition would be hard to surpass.

In our first announcement of this reissue, we failed to express our gratitude to Hoyte D. Kline of Cleveland and Dick Rieber of Bethesda, Md., who lent their new copies of the original Paramounts for dubbing.

4

SOLD OUT. Limited Edition No. 4, which was announced to subscribers by postal card last May, is entirely sold out and no more copies will be available. However, the same two sides have been issued on the Commodore Music Shops' U.H.C.A. label.

4
SALTY DOG
(Charlie Jackson)
Recorded in 1926 on Paramount 12399 by
FREDDIE KEPPARD'S JAZZ CARDIN
JAZZ INFORMA
Freddie Keppard, trumpet;
Vincent, trombone; Jimmy O'B
clarinet; Arthur Campbell,
no; Jasper Taylor, wood b
Vocal Chorus: Charlie Jackson.
LIMITED EDITION
Released for the subscribers of
JAZZ INFORMATION
Box 6, Station H, N. Y. C.
2653-2
4
STOCK YARDS STRUT
(Jasper Taylor)
Recorded in 1926 on Paramount 12399 by
FREDDIE KEPPARD'S JAZZ CARDINALS
JAZZ INFORMATION
Freddie Keppard, trumpet; Eddie
Vincent, trombone; Jimmy O'Bryant,
clarinet; Arthur Campbell, pia-
no; Jasper Taylor, wood blocks.
LIMITED EDITION
Released for the subscribers of
JAZZ INFORMATION
Box 6, Station H, N. Y. C.
2651-1

Limited Edition No. 4 is a record almost as legendary as the man who made it: the fine Salty Dog and Stock Yards Strut, recorded for Paramount about 1926 by a five-piece band under the direction of Freddie Keppard.

Hottest cornet player in New Orleans in the days before the first World War, Keppard toured the country with the famous Creole Band, settled in Chicago, and spent his last years there is relative obscurity. In his heyday he was so "bigtime" that he refused a Victor offer to record with the Creoles. Later, recording opportunities were fewer. Fortunately, Keppard did make a few sides in the middle twenties: some with Charles Cooke and, more important, two with his own band.

Keppard was well into middle age when Stock Yards Strut and Salty Dog were made, but he still had the remarkable qualities which had brought him fame: an enormously powerful tone, a fine conception of hot musicianship, and an overwhelming drive.

With Keppard on the Paramount session were: Eddie Vincent (Venson), pioneer New Orleans trombone player; Jimmy O'Bryant, clarinet, who abandoned his usual style in favor of an impressive imitation of Johnny Dodds; pianist Arthur Campbell, and Jasper Taylor, drums.

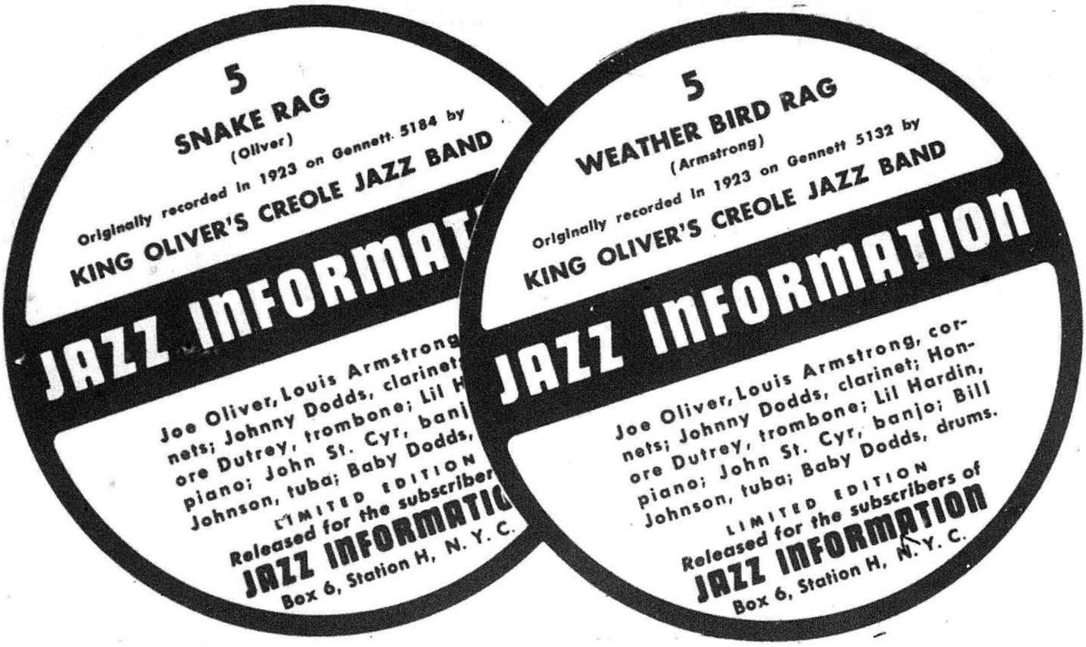
Under Keppard's inspiration all the men surpass themselves. Salty Dog is a slow blues in which Keppard's warm, rough lead swings magnificently over Vincent's strong rhythmic support. Papa Charlie Jackson sings a blues vocal (God made a woman, he made her mighty funny), and the ensemble rides out to a few closing remarks by King Keppard himself.

Stock Yards Strut, in faster tempo, consists of a series of ensemble choruses with breaks and solo spots for trumpet, clarinet and piano. Again Keppard demonstrates his remarkable ability to whip up immense tension with a minimum of notes. Small wonder that this rare, and hitherto almost forgotten, record is ranked among the finest jazz discs.

After considerable searching, we were fortunate enough to locate two new copies of the original for dubbing. We are greatly indebted to the owners, E. B. Sullivan and Franklin Lyons of Chicago, for permitting us to borrow them. Thanks are also due to Hugh Davis of Chicago for an exceptionally fine re-recording job and to our own Chicago correspondents, John Steiner and Wesley M. Neff, for locating the records and arranging for the dubbing. For the personnel of the band we are indebted again to Wes Neff, who obtained it from Jasper Taylor.

5

THREE FOURTHS SOLD OUT! The remaining copies of Limited Edition No. 5 are available to subscribers only at $1.00 postpaid. When our edition has been sold out, the same sides will be issued on the Commodore Music Shops' U.H.C.A. label.


5
SNAKE RAG
(Oliver)
Originally recorded in 1923 on Gennett 5184 by
KING OLIVER'S CREOLE JAZZ BAND
JAZZ INFORMAT
Joe Oliver, Louis Armstrong
nets; Johnny Dodds, clarinet
ore Dutrey, trombone; Lil H
piano; John St. Cyr, banj
Johnson, tuba; Baby Dodds,
LIMITED EDITION
Released for the subscriber
JAZZ INFORMATIO
Box 6, Station H, N.Y.C.
5
WEATHER BIRD RAG
(Armstrong)
Originally recorded in 1923 on Gennett 5132 by
KING OLIVER'S CREOLE JAZZ BAND
JAZZ INFORMATION
Joe Oliver, Louis Armstrong, cornets; Johnny Dodds, clarinet; Honore Dutrey, trombone; Lil Hardin, piano; John St. Cyr, banjo; Bill Johnson, tuba; Baby Dodds, drums.
LIMITED EDITION
Released for the subscribers of
JAZZ INFORMATION
Box 6, Station H, N.Y.C.

Limited Edition No. 5 couples two more of the great sides recorded in 1923 for Gennett by King Oliver's Creole Jazz Band. Snake Rag and Weather Bird Rag were made at the same time as the other Olivers previously reissued by JAZZ INFORMATION, and the line-up was of course the same: The two sides are excellent contrasting examples of the Oliver band's powerful New Orleans ensemble, with everybody working together except for a few solo breaks.

Snake Rag (composed by Alphonse Picou although the label credit went to Oliver) features a prominent clarinet part against the slashing drive of two cornets. Johnny Dodds' beautiful playing stands out in the unusually savage ensemble. Weather Bird Rag (the same tune later recorded by Armstrong as a trumpet solo) is less forceful, more buoyant. Its ensembles are closer, with no one instrument outstanding. Among the breaks which punctuate the band music are a pair of the famous Oliver-Armstrong two-cornet passages.

Weather Bird Rag was reissued several years ago in England, and we have used the excellent dubbing made at that time. For Snake Rag, a new master has been made through the courtesy of Art Feher of Cleveland, Ohio.

6

NOW AVAILABLE. Limited Edition No. 6 goes on sale for the first time with this announcement. Copies are available to subscribers only at $1.00 postpaid. When the J.I. Limited Edition has been completely sold out, the same sides will be made available on the Commodore Music Shops' U.H.C.A. label.

Limited Edition No. 6 couples two entirely different recordings, both originally issued on the Paramount label.

One of the earliest recordings to feature colored New Orleans musicians, Ollie Powers' Play That Thing antedates even the first King Olivers by several months. Powers' orchestra played regularly at the Dreamland Cafe in Chicago. For his only recording date, the leader added two great musicians, Tommy Ladnier and Jimmie Noone.

Ladnier's two muted cornet choruses, ferociously intense, show his genius perhaps better than anything else on records; for power and depth of feeling they are almost unequalled. Noone, playing the blues in a simple, effective style, is surprisingly unlike the refined clarinet player we find on his later Vocalions.

The full personnel of the orchestra was: Alec Calimice, Tommy Ladnier, cornets; Eddie Vincent (Venson), trombone; Jimmie Noone, clarinet; Horace Diemer, alto sax; Glover Compton, piano; John Bosley, banjo; William Moore, tuba; Ollie Powers (his real name was Powell), drums. Calimice, who was the regular cornetist with the band, can be heard playing behind Ladnier. His name was omitted from the reissue label for considerations of space.

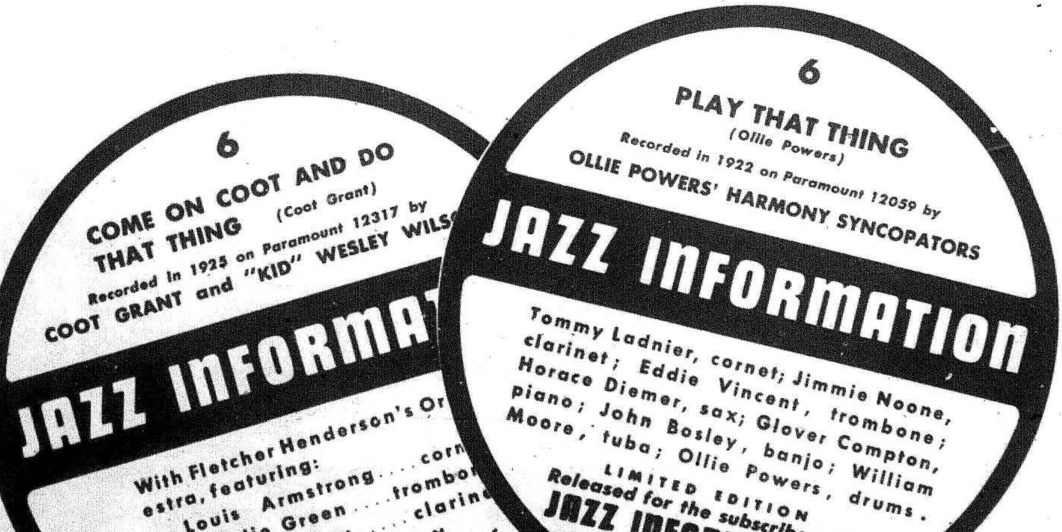
The loose, improvised ensembles of Play That Thing make an interesting contrast to the crisp New Orleans drive of the Oliver Gennetts. But the two solo choruses apiece by Ladnier and Noone are what make the record so vitally impressive. After them, the band swings into a familiar phrase out of Tin Roof Blues, while the tuba blasts out the melody of Brunies' famous trombone solo.

Several widely different masters of Play That Thing were issued. For this repressing, we have chosen master No. 4, dubbed through the courtesy of Alfred W. Lion of New York City.

* * *

Collectors and musicians who've managed to hear a majority of the important jazz records usually agree in ranking the "Armstrong accompaniments" among the very best. On these records, made in the middle 20's by various blues singers, Louis Armstrong provided remarkably varied and intensely beautiful cornet accompaniments. But because of their rarity these records have been less generally known than the later Armstrong recordings. We are proud to present, in reissue form, seven of the finest of these superb blues sides (see also Limited Editions Nos. 7, 8 and 9).

Come On Coot And Do That Thing features Louis, with a Fletcher Henderson group, accompanying happy-go-lucky entertainers "Coot" Grant and "Kid" Wilson. Charlie Green's gruff, expressive trombone and Buster Bailey's shrill clarinet support Louis, who plays marvelously behind the vocal throughout and leads the band in a stirring instrumental chorus. Coot is an engaging singer; and the tune, an early example of "jump", has a stop-time passage which is effectively utilized. Come On Coot is one of the outstanding examples of Louis' direct, exciting style in accompanying a blues of the popular song type.

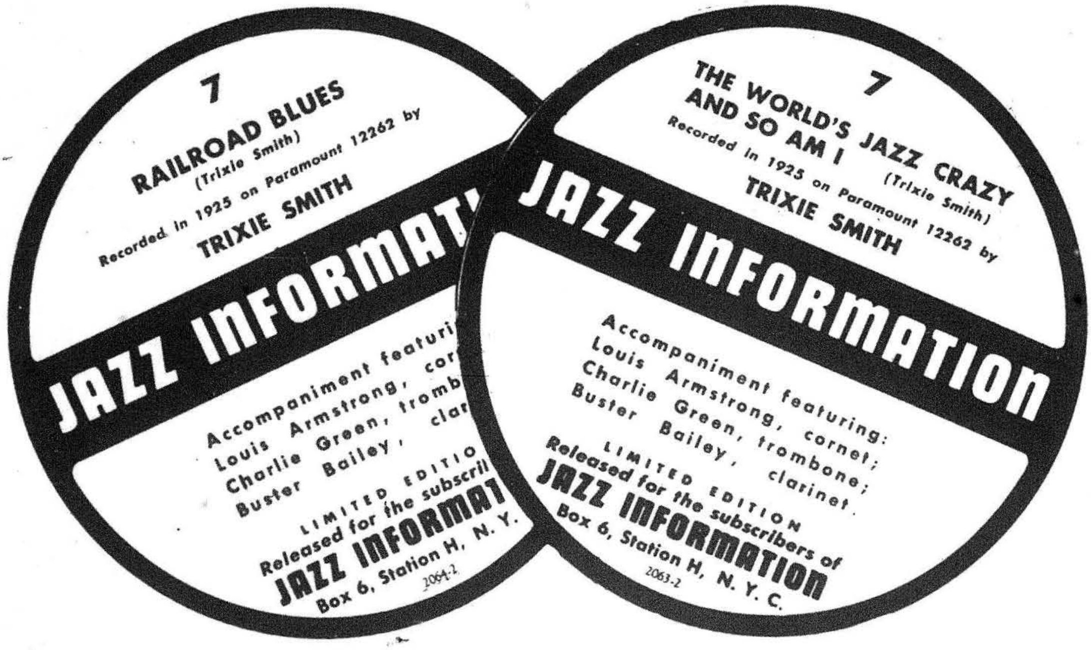


6
COME ON COOT AND DO
THAT THING (Coot Grant)
Recorded in 1925 on Paramount 12317 by
COOT GRANT and "KID" WESLEY WILS
JAZZ INFORMA
With Fletcher Henderson's Or
estra, featuring:
Louis Armstrong ....corn
Charlie Green ....trombo
Buster Bailey .....clarin
LIMITED EDITION
Released for the subscribers of
JAZZ INFORMATION
Box 6, Station H, N. Y. C.
2280-2

6
PLAY THAT THING
(Ollie Powers)
Recorded in 1922 on Paramount 12059 by
OLLIE POWERS' HARMONY SYNCOPATORS
JAZZ INFORMATION
Tommy Ladnier, cornet; Jimmie Noone, clarinet; Eddie Vincent, trombone; Horace Diemer, sax; Glover Compton, piano; John Bosley, banjo; William Moore, tuba; Ollie Powers, drums.
LIMITED EDITION
Released for the subscribers of
JAZZ INFORMATION
Box 6, Station H, N. Y. C.
1502-4

7

THREE FOURTHS SOLD OUT! The remaining copies of Limited Edition No. 7 are available to subscribers only at $1.00 postpaid. When our edition has been sold out, the same sides will appear on the Commodore Music Shops' U.H.C.A. label.


7
RAILROAD BLUES
(Trixie Smith)
Recorded in 1925 on Paramount 12262 by
TRIXIE SMITH
JAZZ INFORMATI
Accompaniment featuri
Louis Armstrong, cor
Charlie Green, tromb
Buster Bailey, clar
LIMITED EDITIO
Released for the subscri
JAZZ INFORMAT
Box 6, Station H, N. Y.
2064-2
7
THE WORLD'S JAZZ CRAZY AND SO AM I
(Trixie Smith)
Recorded in 1925 on Paramount 12262 by
TRIXIE SMITH
JAZZ INFORMATION
Accompaniment featuring:
Louis Armstrong, cornet;
Charlie Green, trombone;
Buster Bailey, clarinet.
LIMITED EDITION
Released for the subscribers of
JAZZ INFORMATION
Box 6, Station H, N. Y. C.
2063-2

Limited Edition No. 7 presents two of the rarest and most wonderful Armstrong accompaniments: Railroad Blues and The World's Jazz Crazy, recorded for Paramount in 1925 by old-timer Trixie Smith with Armstrong, Charlie Green and Buster Bailey heading the accompanying band.

Railroad Blues is certainly one of Armstrong's most fascinating records. After an introduction which stresses the blue minor third, Louis leads the band in playing a break-style accompaniment for Trixie's first chorus. The singer has a light but good voice which she uses skillfully in the blues (I got the railroad blues, I wanna see my home town). Taking off after her second chorus, Louis plays a simply constructed, strikingly beautiful blues solo. Then during the last two vocal choruses he is heard behind the singer as well as in the between-line phrases. This accompaniment is impeccably right and delicately sensitive. In the last chorus, for instance, Louis moves effortlessly from a driving, powerful break into a soft, plaintive and melodically delightful passage behind Trixie's next line. Railroad Blues is a grand blues record and there's endless pleasure, for the careful listener, in the accompaniment.

The World's Jazz Crazy (Lawdy, So Am I) is very similar except that here, the material is a "novelty" song composed by Trixie herself, rather than a conventional blues. The tempo is slow and steady; Trixie sings the verse and two choruses, and the band has an exciting chorus of its own.

8

THREE FOURTHS SOLD OUT! The remaining copies of Limited Edition No. 8. are available to subscribers only at $1.00 postpaid. When our edition has been sold out, the same sides will be issued on the Commodore Music Shops' U.H.C.A. label.

Limited Edition No. 8 is a double-barrelled selection, combining superb blues singing with a superb Armstrong accompaniment.

Many blues lovers find Ma Rainey even more thrilling than Bessie Smith. As Kid Ory expressed it, "Ma was a little lower than Bessie ... more bluer ....

8
COUNTIN' THE BLUES
(Ma Rainey)
Recorded in 1925 on Paramount 12238 by
MA RAINEY
JAZZ INFORMAT
Acc. by Her Georgia Jazz
featuring:
Louis Armstrong
Charlie Green
Buster Bailey
LIMITED EDITION
Released for the subscribe
JAZZ INFORMATI
Box 6, Station H, N.Y.C.
1927-2
8
JELLY BEAN BLUES
(Ma Rainey and Lena Arant)
Recorded in 1925 on Paramount 12238 by
MA RAINEY
JAZZ INFORMATION
Acc. by Her Georgia Jazz Band
featuring:
Louis Armstrong cornet
Charlie Green trombone
Buster Bailey clarinet
LIMITED EDITION
Released for the subscribers of
JAZZ INFORMATION
Box 6, Station H, N.Y.C.
1926-2

an oldtimer." Her voice was like Bessie's but deeper and less tutored. Her style, too, was similar; but simpler and more direct. Ma was much closer than Bessie to the source of the blues and their greatest audience — the Negro people outside the metropolitan centers. But her records, all made for Paramount and increasingly rare, have been all but forgotten. Ma's big, almost masculine voice and her majestic delivery turn the bare lyrics of the blues into poignant and beautiful laments. Louis, suiting his mood to hers, uses a muted cornet to answer Ma's slow, sad lines with correspondingly plaintive and sorrowful phrases. Jelly Bean Blues and Countin' The Blues, two of the only three sides on which Rainey and Armstrong were together, must rank with the finest of all vocal blues records.

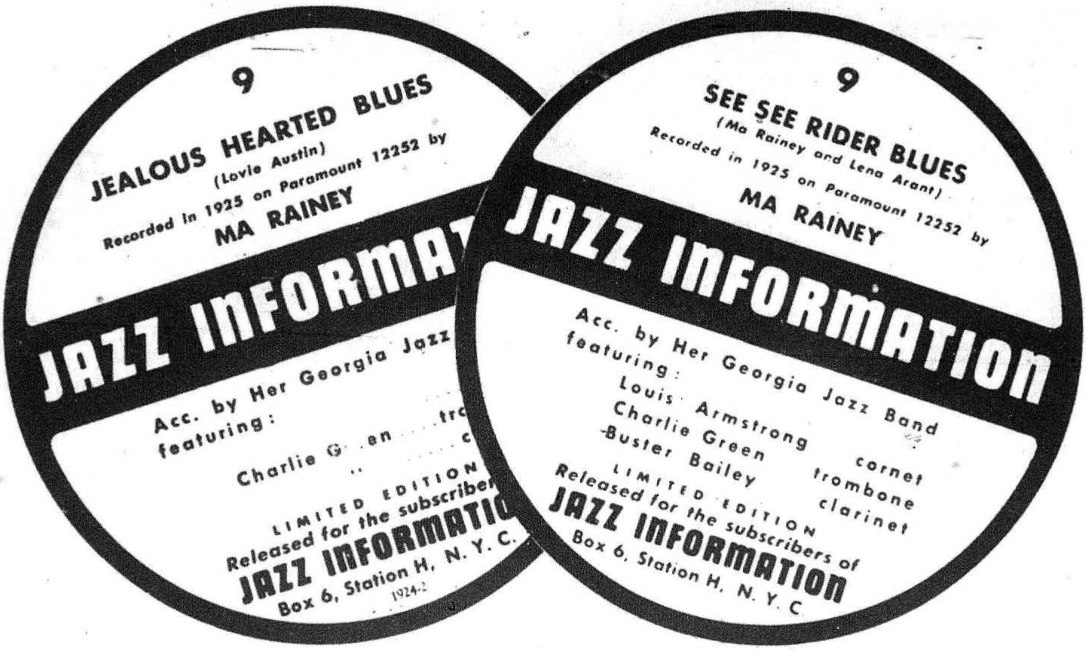
9

READY SOON. Limited Edition No. 9 will be released as soon as Nos. 5, 7 and 8 have been completely sold out — not before. Orders placed now will be filled as soon as possible. Announcements will be sent to all subscribers when this record is released. The price, of course, is $1.00 postpaid.

Limited Edition No. 9 provides the third, last and best example of the Armstrong-Rainey combination. See See Rider Blues (also known as See See Blues) was made at the same session as Countin' and Jelly Bean (see the description above). Perfect relaxation and a slow, powerful swing characterize both the singing and the accompaniment. Louis plays almost continuously, behind and around the vocal, from the arresting introduction to the perfect coda. Behind the singer he improvises a series of phrases with great invention, wonderfully adapted to emphasize and decorate the blues choruses.

The original coupling, which we have kept for the present reissue, was Jealous Hearted Blues. This features a lesser, and hitherto unidentified, cornetist in place of Armstrong. When it was already too late to change our label, this man was tentatively identified as Howard R. Scott. (See page 88). Even without Armstrong's genius for subtle and delightful accompaniment, the band plays a fine background for another superb slow blues, which Ma Rainey sings with unequalled force and passion.

See See Rider Blues was dubbed through the courtesy of Dick Rieber of Bethesda, Md.; and the coupling by courtesy of Art Feher of Cleveland, Ohio.


9
JEALOUS HEARTED BLUES
(Lovie Austin)
Recorded in 1925 on Paramount 12252 by
MA RAINEY
JAZZ INFORMA
Acc. by Her Georgia Jazz
featuring:
Charlie G en tr
LIMITED EDITION
Released for the subscriber
JAZZ INFORMATIO
Box 6, Station H, N. Y. C.
1924-2
9
SEE SEE RIDER BLUES
(Ma Rainey and Lena Arant)
Recorded in 1925 on Paramount 12252 by
MA RAINEY
JAZZ INFORMATION
Acc. by Her Georgia Jazz Band
featuring:
Louis Armstrong cornet
Charlie Green trombone
Buster Bailey clarinet
LIMITED EDITION
Released for the subscribers of
JAZZ INFORMATION
Box 6, Station H, N. Y. C.

10

READY SOON. Limited Edition No. 10 will be released as soon as Nos. 6 and 9 have been sold out — not before. Orders placed in advance will be filled as soon as possible. In addition, announcements will be sent to all subscribers when the record is released. As usual, the price is $1.00 postpaid.

Cake Walking Babies From Home, by the Red Onion Jazz Babies, was recorded in New York in 1924. At that time Armstrong was featured cornetist with Fletcher Henderson's large orchestra, and the Gennett recording sessions offered a welcome opportunity to escape the restrictions imposed by such an orchestra.

Sidney Bechet and the other members of this five-piece combination (Charlie Irvis, trombone; Lil Armstrong, piano; Buddy Christian, banjo) complemented Louis excellently; and the resulting records were superb examples of free, uninhibited New Orleans jazz. Exclusive of vocal accompaniments, Cake Walking Babies is the only Red Onion side on which Armstrong and Bechet played together.

The Clarence Williams tune provided fine material for fast improvised ensemble. And ensemble it is throughout the record, except for the Beatty and Todd vocal refrain (about which the less said the better) and Louis' solo breaks against stop time. Bechet's broad, rolling soprano part and Louis' incisive cornet lead play into each other admirably.

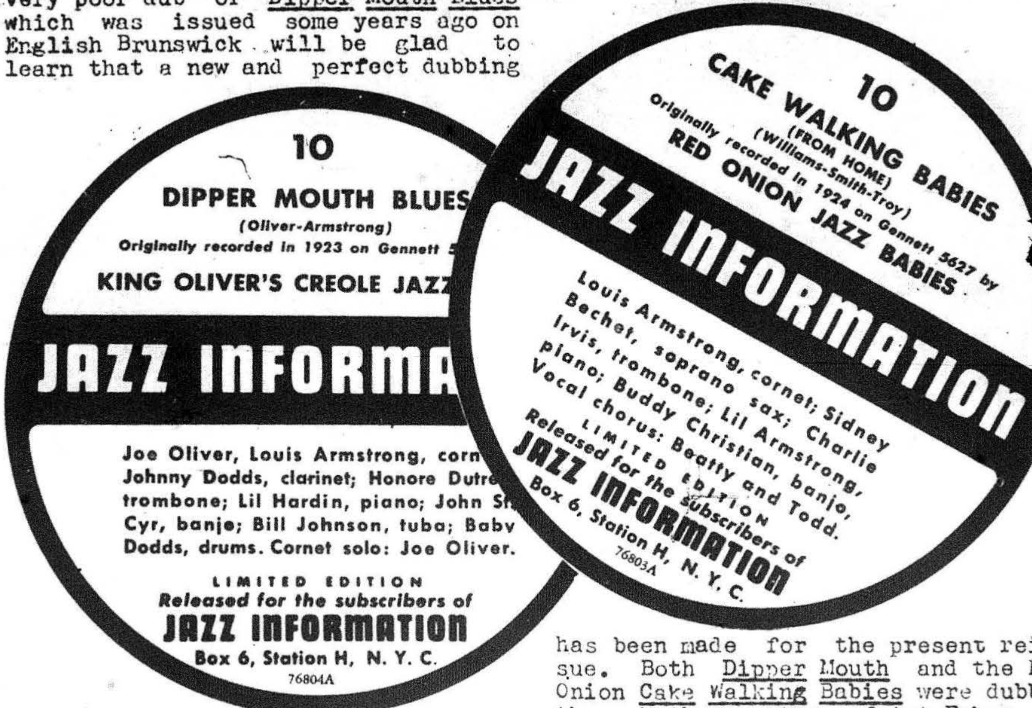
* * *

A fitting conclusion for the JAZZ INFORMATION reissues is the Gennett Dipper Mouth Blues; probably the finest of the many versions of this famous classic, created by King Oliver's Creole Jazz Band.

The Gennett Dipper Mouth excels in a number of ways. Most important, perhaps, is the tempo; which is somewhat slower than the Okeh version and so permits a more deliberate increase of tension than the helter-skelter stomp version. Second is the ensemble quality: the band plays its all-in choruses with matchless zest, and accompanies the two soloists with a rough, powerful swing which reaches its climax in the superb final chorus with its savage bite. Third, the soloists themselves perform marvelously.

The piece is played in its familiar form: introduction, two twelve-bar choruses of stompy ensemble; Johnny Dodds' beautiful (and now traditional) two-chorus clarinet solo; another ensemble chorus, then Oliver's famous muted cornet solo for three choruses, with Armstrong, Dodds and Dutrey all in behind him; followed by an ensemble ending which is unusually fine even for the Oliver band. You'll probably agree that this is the best Dipper Mouth.

Those who are acquainted with the very poor dub of Dipper Mouth Blues which was issued some years ago on English Brunswick will be glad to learn that a new and perfect dubbing has been made for the present reissue. Both Dipper Mouth and the Red Onion Cake Walking Babies were dubbed through the courtesy of Art Feher of Cleveland, Ohio.


10
DIPPER MOUTH BLUES
(Oliver-Armstrong)
Originally recorded in 1923 on Gennett 5
KING OLIVER'S CREOLE JAZZ
JAZZ INFORMA
Joe Oliver, Louis Armstrong, corn
Johnny Dodds, clarinet; Honore Dutre
trombone; Lil Hardin, piano; John St.
Cyr, banjo; Bill Johnson, tuba; Baby
Dodds, drums. Cornet solo: Joe Oliver.
LIMITED EDITION
Released for the subscribers of
JAZZ INFORMATION
Box 6, Station H, N. Y. C.
76804A
10
CAKE WALKING BABIES
(FROM HOME)
(Williams-Smith-Troy)
Originally recorded in 1924 on Gennett 5627 by
RED ONION JAZZ BABIES
JAZZ INFORMATION
Louis Armstrong, cornet; Sidney
Bechet, soprano sax; Charlie
Irvis, trombone; Lil Armstrong,
piano; Buddy Christian, banjo.
Vocal chorus: Beatty and Todd.
LIMITED EDITION
Released for the subscribers of
JAZZ INFORMATION
Box 6, Station H, N. Y. C.
76803A

JAZZ INFORMATION
Box 6, Station H
New York City

Gentlemen: Enclosed please find $________, for which please send me postpaid the Limited Edition reissues I have checked below:

( ) I am not a subscriber. Send me L.E. No. 3, Wesley Wallace - Jabo Williams.

( ) I am a subscriber. Please send me the following:

- ☐ L.E. No. 3, Wesley Wallace - Jabo Williams.
- ☐ L.E. No. 5, Oliver Snake Rag - Weather Bird.
- ☐ L.E. No. 6, Powers Play That Thing - Grant-Wilson Come On Coot.
- ☐ L.E. No. 7, Trixie Smith Railroad Blues - The World's Jazz Crazy.
- ☐ L.E. No. 8, Ma Rainey Jelly Bean Blues - Countin' The Blues.
- ☐ L.E. No. 9, Ma Rainey See See Rider Blues - Jealous Hearted Blues.
- ☐ L.E. No. 10, Oliver Dipper Mouth Blues - Red Onion Jazz Babies Cake Walking Babies.

It is understood that all the above records are ready for immediate shipment, excepting Nos. 9 and 10, which will be shipped separately, and at a later date. Price of each record is $1.00 postpaid. No C.O.D. orders can be accepted, nor may any subscriber obtain more than one copy of any record. If you wish to apply your subscription balance to the purchase of these records, please check below and enter the amount credited.

( ) Please apply my subscription balance of $________ to make up the difference between the price of the records I have ordered, and the amount remitted.

NAME____

ADDRESS______________________________________

CITY____________________________ STATE__________

New "Classics in Swing"

JOE SULLIVAN Piano Solos

FOREVERMORE	C-538
DEL MAR RAG	10" - $1.00
SUMMERTIME	C-540
ANDY'S BLUES	10" - $1.00

THE THREE DEUCES

Pee Wee Russell, clarinet; Joe Sullivan, piano; Zutty Singleton, drums.

THE LAST TIME I SAW CHICAGO	C-537
DEUCES WILD	10" - $1.00
JIG WALK	C-539
ABOUT FACE	10" - $1.00

CHU BERRY and his JAZZ ENSEMBLE

Hot Lips Page, trumpet; Chu Berry, tenor sax; Clyde Hart, piano; Al Casey, guitar; Al Morgan, bass; Harry Jaeger, drums.

GEE, AIN'T I GOOD TO YOU	C-1508
ON THE SUNNY SIDE OF THE STREET	12" - $1.50
BLOWING UP A BREEZE	C-541
WHAT'S IT TO YOU	10" - $1.00

COMMODORE MUSIC SHOP

136 EAST 42ND ST. **NEW YORK CITY**

NEW RECORDS

by George M. Avakian

THE THREE DEUCES CMS 537

THE LAST TIME I SAW CHICAGO
DEUCES WILD

Pee Wee Russell, clarinet; Joe Sullivan, piano; Zutty Singleton, drums.

First side is one of the best yet to be issued by Milt Gabler. It's a blues — two choruses by Joe Sullivan and two by Pee Wee Russell — built on a tasteful foundation by Zutty Singleton.

After a ten-bar intro which sets the mood neatly, Joe takes over with the right hand triplets, heavy bass, and solidity you've heard him achieve on a few select records. Joe builds his choruses almost architecturally, but there's no studiousness about it. This is Joe at his best.

Pee Wee's work is typical of one side of Russell which is more familiar to jam session devotees than to record listeners. Starting in low register with a sustained background supplied by Zutty's roll and Sullivan's bass tremolo, Pee Wee pushes, nudges, strains, and fights his way into a last chorus where everybody loosens up and swings, all out.

There's no letdown of tension — from beginning to end, this record has a touch of the old Chicago tightness which the McKenzie-Condons and the Chicago Rhythm Kings had, and the effect is heightened by the background to Pee Wee's first chorus.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Since it was impossible to hear the new records in the back-country cabin in which this issue was prepared, the record reviews could not be written by the editor as they have been in the past. I am very grateful to George Avakian, who gave up some of his last hours before entering the U. S. Army this summer, to write a column covering some of the more important records released since the last issue of JAZZ INFORMATION.

The purpose of these notes is to mention briefly some other records released too late to be included in Avakian's column. First of all, there are two more Commodores: CMS 539, About Face and Jig Walk by the Three Deuces, and CMS 540, Joe Sullivan piano solos of Andy's Blues and Summertime. For the nature and quality of the Deuces, see the review (about 2½ inches to your left) of their earlier release. Jig Walk, a spirited performance of an old Ellington tune, is almost on a par with Last Time; About Face has a good deal too much solo drumming, but the ensemble parts are fine and Pee Wee shows he hasn't forgotten Apex Blues. The other record, like Forevermore and Del Mar Rag (see Avakian's review) is a must for piano collectors. Andy's Blues is slow, choppy, typically Sullivan with the rocking left hand and some charming ideas; Summertime a neat performance of the pop classic with some surprising variations, including a walking bass and a number of treble tricks.

There is also a new Victor album (P-69) by Pete Johnson and Albert Ammons, called "8 To The Bar" with an intelligent subtitle: "Two Piano Boogie Woogie For Dancing". These eight sides, all original titles, have come in for some rather indiscriminate critical panning which seems to me exaggerated. Put together, they sound like a better-than-average evening at Cafe Society — which means a lot of good piano even if it's not as good as Ammons' and Johnson's individual

It's unfortunate that the reverse of this very wonderful blues has nothing to offer. For your own protection, though, let me say that that's a prejudiced statement; there are three minutes of tom-tomming, and no matter who does it, or how well, I refuse to like three minutes of tom tomming. As for the other things that happen, Sullivan is perhaps more at ease than Pee Wee, but it still adds up to tom toms.

BUD JACOBSON'S Si 103, 106
Jungle Kings

OPUS NO. 1 SANS MELODY
I CAN'T BELIEVE

LAUGHING AT YOU
CLARINET MARMALADE

Carl Rinker, cornet; Bud Jacobson, clarinet; Bud Hunter, tenor sax and clarinet; Frank Melrose, piano; Joe Rushton, bass sax and clarinet; Earl Wiley, drums.

This is a sort of "forgotten men of Chicago" date. Bud Jacobson, who shares with Art Hodes the title of "Outstanding Father in Hot Music", is perhaps the best known of the men, having recorded with Freeman in 1929 (Crazeology, Can't Help Lovin') and with McPartland in 1939 (Decca Chicago album). Budj didn't take a solo on the Freeman sides, and seemed headed for the fate of the late Jimmy Lord, who also made only one record date on which he did not take a solo. Happily, Budj is still going strong and he now has two sessions on wax in the past two years, with a third set for September.

Having heard Budj in Chicago in 1939 and within the past month, I want to say that he still hasn't been recorded at his best. He's a nervous guy before a microphone, it seems, but at that his records don't fall far short of the rating which Bill Russell and I agree he deserves: the hottest clarinetist since Tesch.

Most of the other men never re-

---

work on various labels. And, if you happen to like boogie-woogie, the eight sides aren't monotonous.

Speaking of albums: you can pass up the following Decca summer special prize packages, all cross-coupled reissues of previously available stuff: the "Anthologies" of white and colored jazz; "Drummer Boy", especially; "One O'Clock Jump" (old Basies, and not all of the best); a package of Hot Club of France Quintet reissues and one of old Decca Armstrongs which you should have, if at all, with the original couplings. "Tenor Saxophobia" and "Blackstick" are all-reissue albums, too.

New Decca albums include one by Hazel Scott, "Swinging The Classics"; and a collection of Rosetta Tharpe vocals. Decca's second "Boogie Woogie" collection includes a few interesting reissues which are reviewed in the Jazz Classics department of this issue; and two pretty fair Pete Johnson solos, Basement Boogie and Death Ray Boogie (Decca 3830).

Among the other companies' albums you might be interested in Victor's P-72, "Waller at the Console", a group of Fats organ solos on Negro spiritual themes; and Columbia's own "Boogie Woogie" album, C-44, previously mentioned in our March 21st issue, page 5.

The Sidney Bechet One-Man Band record mentioned briefly by Avakian is Victor 27485. Another unreviewed Bechet is Victor 27386, Coal Black Shine and Baby Won't You Please Come Home, with the same band as Egyptian Fantasy.

Jay McShann's Kansas City orchestra made its wax debut with Decca 8559, Confessin' The Blues and Hootie's Blues; and Art Shaw devoted two sides of Victor 27411 to a performance of the Blues from William Grant Still's Lenox Avenue Suite. There are at least two Lead Belly releases on the Bluebird race list, which you should dig up if you follow gutty folk blues singing; a second record by the Jimmie Noone Trio on Bluebird 8649; a brief glimpse of Bechet in the Victor album of the Chamber Music Society of Lower Basin Street jive; and some Joe Marsala wax on Decca.

Released as this page went to press was Victor album P-75, "Hot Piano", containing Earl Hines' My Melancholy Baby — On The Sunny Side Of The Street (27562), Fats Waller's Carolina Shout and Ring Dem Bells (27563), Duke Ellington's Solitude and Dear Old Southland (27564) and Jelly Roll Morton's Freakish — Seattle Hunch (27575). All are piano solos, all except the Jelly Roll were recorded within the last year for this album. Hines' solos are among the poorest he has made; Waller's Carolina Shout is solider and quite interesting. Ellington produces a piano equivalent of his orchestral music. None of these three records, then, is particularly hot; but the two Jelly Roll reissues are good, melodic jazz piano. For a review of them, see Mr. Quinlisk.

corded before. Bud Hunter never got a break when Chicago history was being written up, but he was one of the boys nevertheless. Carl Rinker, who follows the unusual style of Barney Bigard's cousin Natty Dominique, is another of the unsung local lads. Pianist Frank Melrose has been heard before as "Kansas City Frank", but these are his first records in a decade. Joe Rushton is the Williams College graduate who runs around Chicago on a motorcycle and plays clarinet at Squirrel Ashcraft's Monday night parties because a bass sax looks silly on a Harley Davidson. Drummer Earl Wiley, whom George Wettling (among others) swears by, is the oldest of the men. He came up the hard way, riverboats included, and his name didn't hit print until Boyce Brown worked with him at the Liberty Inn.

Not many press clippings for these boys, but they don't stop to think about that. They play well as a unit, and with a different conception from most of the jazz records you've been hearing. There's a good old musty 1928 freshness.

The first three titles are Jacobson originals. Opus No. 1 (since retitled Love At Sight) and Laughing At You (a 1926 jam favorite of the Chi mob, penned by Budj and Eddie Condon) are the two best sides. Laughing At You, along with Art Hodes' Selection From The Gutter and the Three Deuces' Last Time, represents the cream of this review. Melrose plays a delightful introduction and there's a healthy rock in the ensembles.

The other two sides are faster and suffer slightly from muddy recording, but the stuff is there. Bud Hunter's tenor sax chorus on Clarinet Marmalade is the solo of the session, and is followed by successive clarinet choruses by Jacobson, Hunter and Rushton. The idea was to carry the Tesch-Mezz-Cless three reed session of 1928 to its logical extreme, and what better title could have been chosen than Clarinet Marmalade?

MEADE "LUX" LEWIS BN 19, 20
Harpsichord solos

VARIATIONS ON A THEME:

I. 19 Ways Of Playing A Chorus
II. Self-Portrait
III. School of Rhythm
IV. "Feelin' Tomorrow Like I Feel Today..."

Four twelve-inch sides of the blues on a harpsichord.

This is the first real effort to record such a combination. Sylvia Marlowe and Johnny Guarnieri don't count (a statement sweepingly suitable to an eminent reactionary); Meade "Lux" Lewis, on the other hand, is nothing if not a blues artist — and no one has yet labeled Lewis "nothing". As for the harpsichord, it remains a harpsichord, even after the workout Meade gives it.

These are the factors, then, which we must consider; the way Meade plays the blues, and the instrument he uses as his medium of expression. The Lewis part is easy. Meade is Meade, piano or harpsichord. Unlike his celeste work on the Blue Note Edmond Hall sides (which also included some astonishing bass by Private Israel Crosby), Meade makes few changes in his approach to the harpsichord, an instrument much closer to the piano for his purposes. The first side is typical Lewis.

Now for the harpsichord. I've never gotten on intimate terms with one, but it seems to be a fairly complicated matter of tone pedals and a spare keyboard. Lewis makes use of these resources to get off some remarkable effects — in the first choruses of the second side, he produces a remarkable organ tone, and later on he comes up with some single-note stuff which you'd swear came from a guitar. He winds up combining the two!. The last side is also a good example of Meade and the harpsichord making a pleasant blend.

The harpsichord has faults which cannot be overlooked, however; mainly, too much resonance and a tendency toward running notes together, especially when Meade (encouraged, perhaps, by the extremely fast action of the instrument) plays in rapid tempo.

The records are extremely interesting, although I can't say that the harpsichord wears well with me, and Meade has a couple of barren spots which were fresh when you heard them on piano. Forty eight inches is a lot of wax.

JOE SULLIVAN CMS 538
Piano solos

FOREVERMORE
DEL MAR RAG

Just in case you've forgotten how good Joe Sullivan is, here are two fine, contrasting solos, Joe's first in five or six years. Forevermore is the tune Jimmie Noone and Earl Hines did for Vocalion in 1928, and the interesting thing is that Earl's left hand on that particular record was very much like Joe's often is. But there's no resemblance between Joe's record and the old Hines chorus.

Forevermore is a pretty tune and Joe does it in a pretty way. But — and this is important — he doesn't do a Joe Bushkin (remember his brutal Commodore pink - tea sides?) No lace on Sullivan's drawers. Joe plays intensely, feelingly. He is really an interpretive artist in the proper sense of the word. Forevermore gains by being played by Sullivan.

Del Mar Rag consecrates in name Big Crosby's well known race track. It's the kind of tune Brother Bob's band would murder if Zurke were still in it. It's a real rag, and Joe really goes. He lets out the iron left and sails off, with plenty of breaks on the way. There are the occasional Wallerisms and, strangely enough, a touch of Hines too. (How about James P. Johnson, while we're at it?)

Chicago Conservatory or no, Joe is at heart one of the blues pianists. Move over, Hodes, let Sullivan in!

ART HODES Si 9001
Piano solos

ORGAN GRINDER BLUES
A SELECTION FROM THE GUTTER

Second side is perhaps Hodes' best recorded work to date. Both are effective blues based on a repetitive theme — the Clarence Williams tune in the bass, and the original Selection (which is reminiscent of Tin Roof Blues)in the right hand.

Let's get at that Hodes side first. It's not as "dirty" as the title implies: in fact, it's almost sophisticated jazz (but jazz, God damn it, not swing or jump) with its roots nonetheless very firmly imbedded in the right thing. Which brings us back to where we started: it's "A Selection From The Gutter". You might infer from this that Art, here, is like Joe Sullivan in Forevermore, only more basically hot — which is passably true. Art's solo is on the blues, and Art is closer to the blues, anyway.

Hodes plays with magnificent simplicity. He is never ornate, always moving. He is a blues pianist in the truest sense: he prefers the blues for his material, and he interprets everything he plays in the blues idiom. Merrill Hammond and I spent a delightful evening last June hearing Art at Barney Gallant's snooty restaurant, a spot which couldn't take Snowy Morning more than once an evening. Yet Art didn't give an inch. He quit when the boss offered him a raise if he'd smile at the customers and fawn all over them.

Organ Grinders Blues, taken at a somewhat faster tempo, is only a notch or two below the Selection in quality, simply because Art couldn't top his other performance. If you like Art as well as I do, you'll enjoy his other piano record (Solo Art, Ross Tavern Boogie and South Side Shuffle) and his work on the Signature records of Tin Roof and Randolph Street Drag.

SIDNEY BECHET Vi 27447
and his New Orleans Feetwarmers

WHEN IT'S SLEEPY TIME DOWN SOUTH
I AIN'T GONNA GIVE NOBODY NONE
OF MY JELLY ROLL

Gus Aiken, trumpet; Sandy Williams, trombone; Sidney Bechet, clarinet and soprano sax; Lemuel Johnson, tenor sax; Cliff Jackson, piano; Wilson Myers, bass; Arthur Herbert, drums.

Like all Sidney Bechet records, this is for the Bechet fans. Victor has been on a Bechet kick ever since the Feetwarmers' Maple Rag found its way to the Bluebird race list, and of the many records which have appeared under Sidney's name since then, I Ain't Gonna Give turns out to be the best of what seems to me a not-too-sensational lot.

The Jelly Roll side has a glowing health to it which can be attributed mainly to the ensemble work. I have an idea that the prime factor here was Gus Aiken's willingness to work in a secondary role with Bechet. So many of the other Bechet records have sounded like a push-pull contest among three horns — but here, with a fourth horn added (an unobtrusive and good tenor sax man named Lemuel Johnson), the unity finally appears. Sidney tones down the vibrato and soprano "effects" and settles down to some real playing. There is one bad spot: a Blantonesque bowed bass solo by Wilson Myers; followed, however, by some two-fisted Cliff Jackson piano.

Sleepy Time is given a sedate treatment, with Aiken's trumpet and Sandy Williams' trombone shining in a pleasant first chorus and Sidney taking over from there.

By the way, have you heard Bechet play six instruments at once on the Victor Sheik and Blues of Bechet? They kept playing back and dubbing, while Sidney kept accompanying himself. Unique.

COOTIE WILLIAMS OK 6224
and his Orchestra

BLUES IN MY CONDITION
AIN'T MISBEHAVIN'

Cootie backed by some of the Badman's boys.

Lou McGarity plays some surprising trombone and Arthur Bernstein is still the boy, but the rest of the support doesn't matter. The saxes get away with an imitation of the three-reed backing Cootie used to get when he was where he belonged, but nothing much happens. You have to be a Cootie fan to get this one. If you get if because you like the Goodman boys, then you're on your own.

RED ALLEN OK 6281
and his Orchestra

K. K. BOOGIE
OL' MAN RIVER

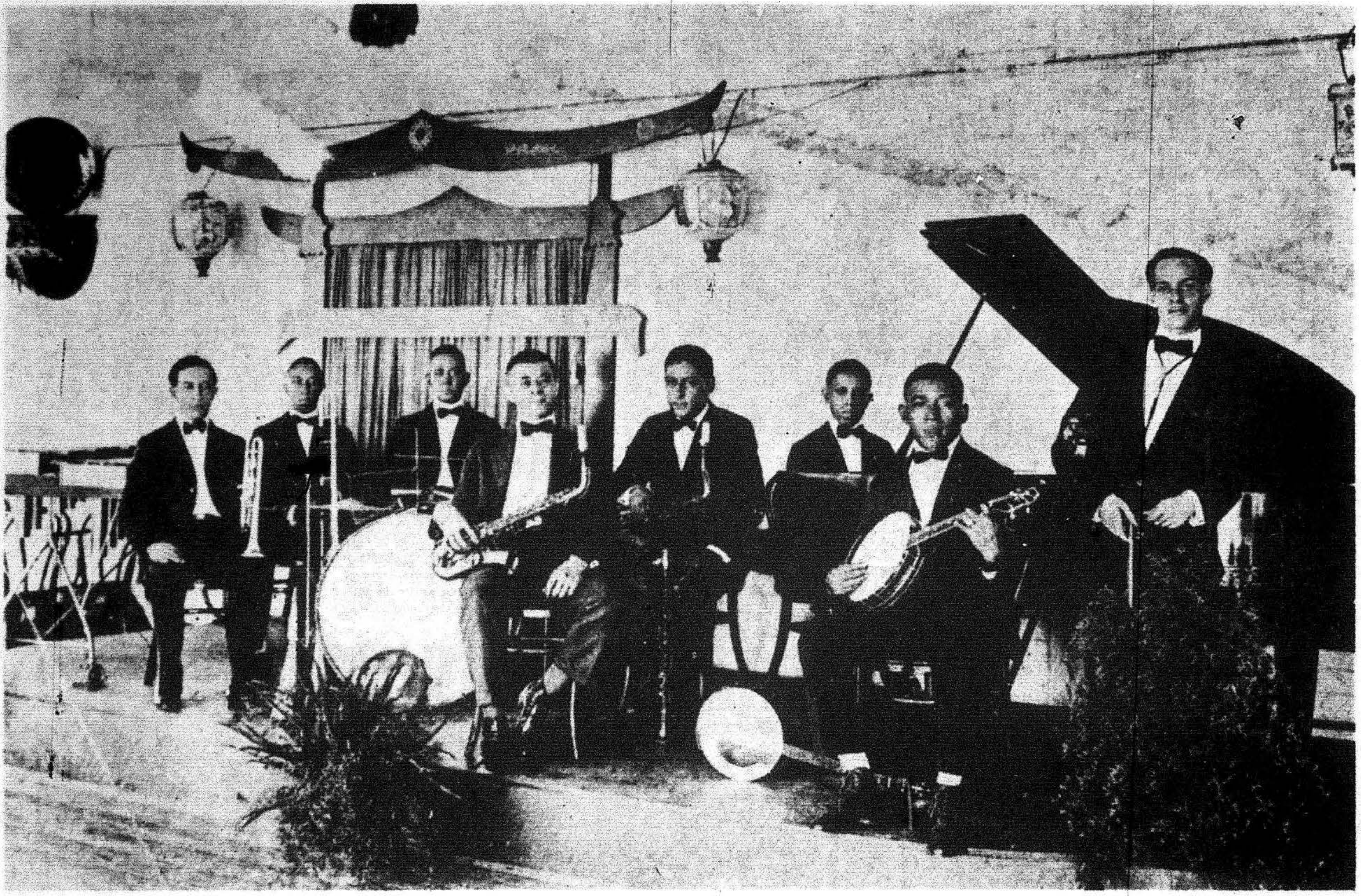
Henry "Red" Allen, trumpet; J. C. Higginbotham, trombone; Edmond Hall, clarinet; Kenny Kersey, piano; Billy Taylor, bass; Jimmy Hoskins, drums.

First side is the Cafe Society floorshow specialty which featured pianist Kenny Kersey (K.K.) with the Allen band, playing a fast blues. Kersey is an astonishingly facile and tireless musician, who is possibly the best modern-jump-swing pianist around. Looking at it negatively, he doesn't play one note to a bar a la Basie, nor does he Tatum-twiddle the way Teddy Wilson unfortunately does at times.

The performance is almost as spirited as it was down at 2 Sheridan Square (the boys are no longer there). This upholds the old adage that records are never as good as in-person performances — although if it weren't for this record, K. K. Boogie would soon be just a faded memory (or, less probably, get built up to surprising proportions). Q. - Where would Bix and Tesch be now without records? A. - In the same boat with Emmet Hardy and Buddy Bolden, because Jimmy MacPartland and Pee Wee Russell are Jimmy and Pee Wee, not Tesch and Bix. Catch on? Only the last link of the chain would be left.

Getting back to the record, the coupling is a slick job with the melody hidden in the first chorus (an idea which pleases me more than the melody ever did). The boys work up steam and there's a good Allen vocal. Before I forget it, note Billy Taylor's fine bass on both sides.

Let's hope this band doesn't have to break up, the way the Hodes and McPartland bands had to



A. J. PIRON AND HIS NOVELTY ORCHESTRA, photographed in New Orleans in the early twenties. This is almost the same line-up as Piron used on his Victor records; left to right, Peter Bocage, trumpet; John Lindsay, trombone; Louis Cottrelle, drums; Louis Guarino, alto sax; Lorenzo Tio, Jr., clarinet and tenor sax; Steve Lewis, piano; Charles Bocage, banjo; Piron, violin and leader. Photo from W. M. Neff.

earlier this year (or did Jimmy get a job after the Brass Rail folded?). And it's criminal that the McPartland mob didn't hit wax at all, because it was the best of the three.

KANSAS CITY JAZZ DE Album 214

PETE JOHNSON'S De 18121
Band
627 STOMP

JOE TURNER De 18121
and his Fly Cats
PINEY BROWN BLUES

Oran "Hot Lips" Page, trumpet; Pete Johnson, piano; John Collins, guitar; Abe Bolar, bass; A. G. Godley, drums. For 627 Stomp Eddie Barefield, clarinet, and Don Stovall and Don Byas, saxes, added.

MARY LOU WILLIAMS De 18122
and her Kansas City Seven

BABY DEAR
HARMONY BLUES

ANDY KIRK De 18123
and his Clouds of Joy

TWELFTH STREET RAG
THE COUNT

Harold Baker, trumpet; Theodore Donnelly, trombone; Ed Inge, clarinet; Dick Wilson, tenor; Mary Lou Williams, piano; Booker T. Collins, bass; Ben Thigpen, drums. For Andy Kirk sides Harry Lawson, Clarence Trice, trumpets; Henry Wells, trombone; Rudy Powell, John Harrington, saxes; and Floyd Smith, guitar, added.

ORAN "HOT LIPS" PAGE De 18124
and his Band
SOUTH
LAFAYETTE

Personnel same as Piney Brown.

COUNT BASIE De 18125
and his Orchestra

DOGGIN' AROUND
GOOD MORNING BLUES

Reissues; for personnel see labels.

EDDIE DURHAM De 18126
and his Band

I WANT A LITTLE GIRL
MOTEN'S SWING

Joe Keys, trumpet; Buster Smith, Willard Brown, Lem C. Johnson, saxes; Conrad Frederick, piano; Eddie Durham, guitar; Averill Pollard, bass; Arthur Herbert, drums.

Are you a Basie fan? That's important, although Basie is represented on only two sides out of twelve, because Kansas City style (a recent development — see your 1939 Tempo file) is really "the way Basie used to play." Going back to sources, you get into the famous Bennie Moten band in which Basie played piano, not tiddlywinks. I never did like the Moten band, and Moten Swing is the only side I have (my copy is backed by the Henry Allen Pay-trol Wagon).

How K.C. are the records? Well, the catch is that Bob Chester, Charlie Barnet, and, I suppose, the non-union band which now plays at your old high school's dances, all play K.C. style, more or less. So far as I can see, it's swing music (that awful stuff) — straight non-Lunceford swing, by bands reading arrangements. Let's break it down:

The drummers camp on the high hat or some other convenient cymbal and cook up an occasional rim shot; the bands riff (even the small bands); the trumpets play with the broad tone of the usual colored swing musician; the trombones see little service except for ensemble effect; the clarinetists play infrequently and with bad tone and taste; the saxophonists ramble all over on their solos; the bass players use a melodic walking bass.

It's swing music, all right. It's in between the directness of the old Fletcher Henderson and Luis Russell bands and the complexity of the streamlined Lunceford gang. Which covers a lot of middle ground, and you can have most of it.

Decca wisely sticks to native K. C. tunes and (as much as possible) K. C. musicians in this album. Eight of the titles are old Moten repertoire numbers. The rest are new tunes of the throw-together variety, three being blues.

The records are very good, I suppose, if you're a swing fan — that is, if you prefer orchestras to jam bands, and like Roy Eldridge better than Muggsy Spanier.

I like the Basie reissues in this album (the best of Basie is on Decca). Joe Turner sings well on his one side. The Pete Johnson works up steam. I Want A Little Girl is always one of the good tunes. Ted Donnelly paradoxes what I said above about trombonists by shining on Andy Kirk's The Count, which has gotten very Basie-ish since the Moten boys made it. The other sides are competently done versions of Moten standards, of which Mary Lou's band's Harmony Blues is nicest, thanks mainly to the pleasant tune. The performances are that even.

Except, perhaps, for the Pete Johnson 627 Stomp and Basie's Doggin' Around, there isn't the power and drive you'd hope for from this collection. Not enough spark, I'm afraid. I couldn't stand playing these records every day. As Panassie might put it, "Ils n'ont rien dire."

K. C. style may or may not be, but we'll call the album authentic. Which is more than one can say of Decca's New Orleans album, wherein the music of the O.A.C. King Oliver Jazz Band (which I was brought up to believe was New Orleans incarnate) was shockingly disregarded in favor of guitar and drum solos. (Money, money, money, money, money!)

EARL HINES BB 11199
and his Orchestra

JULIA
COMIN' IN HOME

Did you ever notice how distinctively Hines' orchestras have always stressed the beat? Check on your old Victors and Brunswicks. A slapped bass and two-beat bass drum help do it. And if you want Julia, make it the Brunswick version, which was noace, but at least didn't have Billy Eckstein singing. But then, some folks object to breathless Walter Fuller. The sum and substance of all this is that Hines has a nice bit on Julia, which shows the band off to advantage. The backing does not, and Earl tries to play 1941 rather than Hines.

LOUIS ARMSTRONG De 3900
and his Orchestra

I'LL GET MINE BYE AND BYE
YES SUH!

Sad to relate, Louis is now recording hillbilly tunes which remind you of The Deacon Went Down. You know, "to the cellar to pray." And the trombone player is one of the world's total losses. It's pitiful to hear him try to jam.

Louis gets cutish on the Yes Suh lyrics, thus putting himself in grave danger of being carved by Billy Banks (Rhythmakers, 1932, see U.H.C.A.). Hence, we must conclude that the millenium is here.

DUKE ELLINGTON Vi 27502
and his Famous Orchestra

THE GIDDYBUG GALLOP
BAKIFF

The Giddybug Gallop, in which more things pop up than in a shooting gallery, except that you can't shoot at them, is a hectic, largely half-time affair. What with the title and all, it should be dedicated to that afternoon I spent at Playland roller-coasting on a dare after a rough reaction from the evening before. But I'm afraid it's really the overture to Duke's Los Angeles musical. That's how bad it sounds.

Bakiff is an interesting Juan Tizol hybridization which puts the Haggart-Bauduc Big Noise From Winnetka lick to good use, and will probably draw violent applause from Paul Edward (excuse me — I mean at least Edouoard) Miller, because of the wonderful composition, the contrapuntally contrapuntal effects of the contrapuntal section, and the wonderful composition, which is the first step in that direction since fifteenth-century monastic choral music —— a significant development in jazz composition and one of the most important orchestrative works since Charlie Elgar's brass and string ensemble's Nat Leslie's arrangement of Hungarian Rhapsody No. 9 (which, remember, Paul heard personally sixteen years ago in a theatre pit). Elgar's band cut hell out of some silly, under-rated kids named Muggsy and Tesch who thought they were jamming (you know there's no such thing as jamming, because only Sid Phillips, Raymond Scott, and Alec Wilder are any good at all). So forget the McKenzie-Condon China Boy and buy Bert Ambrose's B'wanga instead. The Chicagoans, you see, never used the basso ostinato, being incredibly ignorant, musically.

Sorry, Duke, Bakiff is really pretty good, even with Ray Nance's fiddle. Aside from being peeved at Miller, I missed out last night in the 6:55 rush to the Mobilgas pump, so I'm not quite myself today. Ickies always did annoy hot record collectors!

FLETCHER HENDERSON Co 36214
and his Orchestra

LET'S GO HOME
I LIKE MY SUGAR SWEET

Competent big band performances, but who cares? The ensemble passages sound exactly like the 1936-37 Goodman band which featured Dwight Chapin dusting off Teddy Wilson's piano bench when the Trio came out twice an evening at the Pennsylvania. And no wonder — the arranger was Fletcher Henderson in both cases. Personally, I'll take Chapin's six-piece jam band down in Fredericksburg, Virginia.

COUNT BASIE OK 6244
and his Orchestra

GOING TO CHICAGO BLUES
9:20 SPECIAL

With incredibly bad taste, the Basie boys louse up Rushing's blues. The fill-ins are charged with double-time shrieks, blasting riffs (and bad ones at that) and generally unfunny clowning.

The backing features Coleman Hawkins, who doesn't appear until the very end; but when he does it's moderately worthwhile for a change.

JACK TEAGARDEN De 3701, 3844
and his Orchestra

DARK EYES
CHICKS IS WONDERFUL

ST. JAMES INFIRMARY
BLACK AND BLUE

First two are lousy tunes but Jack plays well, as always; I guess you really can't keep a good man down. The last two titles sound as if they should be the nuts, don't they? But the band is awful. The arrangements were probably written by a 21-year-old discovery. Be warned now of the handclapping and unison chanting on St. James Infirmary (redeeming feature: Jack's glass-and-a-half-trombone) and one incredible fill-in during Jack's vocal on Black and Blue. Almost on a par with the atrocities in Basie's Going To Chicago.

HARRY JAMES Co 36190
and his Orchestra

SHARP AS A TACK
JEFFRIE'S BLUES

As my Boston friends would put it, this stynx.

LOUIS ARMSTRONG De 3756
and his Hot Seven

NEW DO YOU CALL THAT A BUDDY
HEY LAWDY MAMA

We'll be stuffy and refer to the band as the new hot seven, without capital initials.

Louis is fine here. There's nothing wrong with his trumpet. His vocals are inhibited; the first side was assigned, no doubt, in hopes of cashing in as a juke-box novelty, and the second isn't his type at all. As a one-man show, Louis still bats high, but those old, old Okehs are still the records. Everyone admits that, D. Leon.

DUKE ELLINGTON Vi 27434
and his Famous Orchestra

AFTER ALL
JOHN HARDY'S WIFE

First side is one of those slow, sentimental, seductive spine-tinglers that Duke does so well. Not one of the very best ones, but nevertheless fine. Composition and arrangement are by little Billy Strayhorn. Brown's trombone leads off; Hodges sounds a bit like Carter here with his flat attack.

Mercer Ellington, Duke's son, is responsible for John Hardy's Wife. Weakened by a release which gets to be as aggravating as the one in Jimmie Noone's Parlophone He's A Different Type Of Guy, and which similarly is adhered to somewhat timidly, this latest Mercer tune is average Ellington (damn good for anyone else). Carney gets the spotlight for the first chorus and a half, and Ray Nance (or perhaps Rex Stewart?) flounders in Cootie Williams' shoes. Who's the drummer, Sonny Greer or "Sonny Greer"?

JIMMIE LUNCEFORD De 3807
and his Orchestra

BATTLE-AXE
CHOCOLATE

High-powered, 1941 arranging, though not as high-powered as Lunceford can be.

So the Lunceford band is good and its soloists are wonderful musicians. But I can't take this heavy panic swing. I've heard many of the riffs before (and so have you) and they're played with a flair for effect which is Lunceford all over. And clean? You'd think it was the old Casa Loma band hitting those notes on the button, except that even Casa Loma never had to jump around those horns the way the Lunceford boys do. Best solos come from tenorman Joe Thomas and trombonist James Young. Remember, this is swing, not jazz.

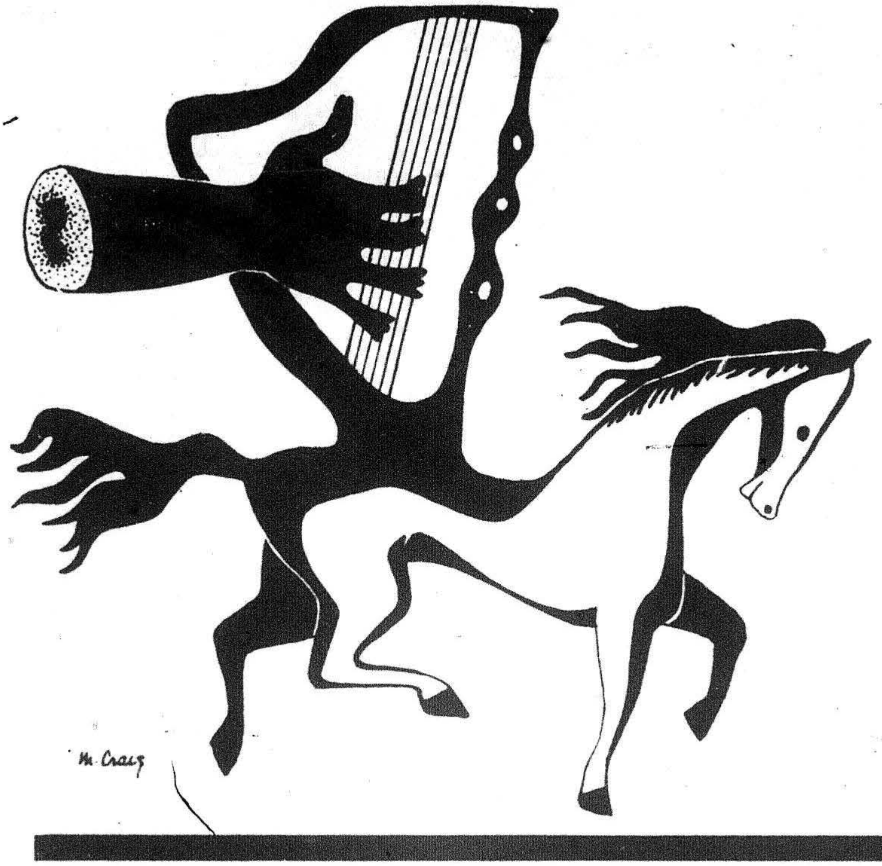
EDDIE SOUTH Co 36193
and his Orchestra

OH LADY BE GOOD
STOMPING AT THE SAVOY

Being antagonistic to violins as a matter of course, I can't say I'm keen on this one.

The Dark Angel has a nice rhythm section, although each man insists on taking a solo, and there's no doubt that South is the best of the field's violinists (Grappelly and Venuti being the competition, I suppose). But this isn't jazz, and it gets by as swing music by a fairly close margin. It's salon stuff, and just what you'd expect of the Uptown Cafe. I never liked Stomping At The Savoy anyway.

New
JAZZ INFORMATION
Re-issues
ANNOUNCED ON PAGES
46-47, 49-51



BLUE NOTE

MEADE "LUX" LEWIS ON THE HARPSICHORD

SINCE its inception BLUE NOTE has been convinced that Meade "Lux" Lewis is exceptional among exceptional hot jazz musicians. Hitherto we have striven in piano and celeste recordings to project as rich a testimony of his musical sensibility as possible. The present recordings on harpsichord emerge from Lewis's longstanding interest in that neglected instrument. Lewis neither adapts the harpsichord to his style of playing, nor his style of playing to the harpsichord. He creates an original synthesis, with the result that a remarkable instrument, exclusively identified with the interpretation of 17th and 18th century music, has been revived and its latent possibilities made equivalent to contemporary musical relations.

Specifically, Lewis begins with a few typical phrases and cadences of the boogie woogie-style musical language, expands, transforms and qualifies them so that the consequent four 12-inch sides are in the nature of a suite with a collective identity, "Variations on a Theme." The music is subdivided as follows:

I. 19 WAYS OF PLAYING A CHORUS. A "first movement" bravura piece.
II. SELF-PORTRAIT. A blues of a personal character, at once nostalgic and austere, employing curious musical symbolism suggestive of a carousel.
III. SCHOOL OF RHYTHM. Galvanic variations with brilliant climactic choruses.
IV. "FEELIN' TOMORROW LIKE I FEEL TODAY . . " A buoyant, singing affirmation of the basic alphabet of the blues.

—MAX MARGULIS

VARIATIONS ON A THEME

NO. 19 12 INCH

1. NINETEEN WAYS OF PLAYING A CHORUS
2. SELF-PORTRAIT

NO. 20 12 INCH

3. SCHOOL OF RHYTHM
4. "FEELIN' TOMORROW LIKE I FEEL TODAY . ."

Jazz Classics

by Robert Quinlisk

COLUMBIA REISSUES

BIX BEIDERBECKE Co Album C-29

BIX BEIDERBECKE Co 35664
and his New Orleans Lucky Seven

ROYAL GARDEN BLUES
GOOSE PIMPLES

Bix Beiderbecke, cornet; Bill Rank, trombone; Don Murray, clarinet; Frank Signorelli, piano; Howdy Quicksell, banjo; Adrian Rollini, bass sax; Chauncey Moorehouse, drums.

BIX BEIDERBECKE Co 35665-6
and his Gang

THOU SWELL
LOUISIANA

OL' MAN RIVER
WA DA DA

Bix Beiderbecke, cornet; Bill Rank, trombone; Izzy Friedman, clarinet; Lennie Hayton, piano; Min Leibrook, bass sax; George Marsh, drums.

TRAM, BIX and LANG Co 35667

FOR NO REASON AT ALL IN C

PAUL WHITEMAN Co 35667
and his Orchestra

SWEET SUE - JUST YOU

BIX BEIDERBECKE Co 36156
and his Gang

JAZZ ME BLUES
AT THE JAZZ BAND BALL

Bix Beiderbecke, cornet; Bill Rank, trombone; Don Murray, clarinet; Frank Signorelli, piano; Howdy Quicksell, banjo; Adrian Rollini, bass sax; Chauncey Moorehouse, drums.

Most of the records on which Bix played his best horn were reissued long ago on Brunswick, Vocalion and U.H.C.A. Instead of re-listing these, the Columbia Beiderbecke album contains second-rank Bix items. Singin' The Blues, Jazz Me Blues, Riverboat Shuffle and the other best Bix records remain to be reissued later. Best of the lot is the coupling originally issued under the name of "New Orleans Lucky Seven"; these two sides were made at Bix's best small-band Okeh dates. The four sides by Bix and his Gang are from a later and inferior session, the trio side resembles the better-known Wringin' And Twistin', and Sweet Sue was cut down from the 12-inch Whiteman recording.

The Bix cult has gone much too far to be funny. His death should be profoundly regretted; for if he had lived, the myth could never have made such headway or done so much harm. But the romantic tales, so far from the truth, of the little boy from Davenport who made a cornet into something divine, and played his heart out before his thirtieth year, are known to thousands who have only a blank look for the names of Louis Armstrong, Tommy Ladnier, Freddie Keppard, Muggsy Spanier. This fantastic publicity has prevented musicians and collectors alike from forming a true idea of Bix's place in jazz.

And of course this legend, like many such, has backfired. The same people who formerly joined in praising Bix will say (in private) "Bix? he stinks!" which is no better criticism, or better sense, than to say "Bix was God." And to say, as many now do, "Bix wasn't a hot man" doesn't help much more.

It ought to be plain, to anyone who listens to his records with an unbiased ear, that Bix had certain qualities which have never been duplicated. That clear, sweet tone, the clarity and simplicity of line, the delicate phrasing are all his own. So is his peculiar talent for melodic creation, far as it may be from jazz. We have to compare these qualities, however, to those of Louis Armstrong, or a dozen others in that tradition, to see them in good perspective. Then we see that Bix did have something to say within the outlines of jazz; but a brief and quiet word only, and off the main track which brought jazz its greatest achievements.

If we accept the Wolverines' records as a praiseworthy but rather inadequate imitation of the New Orleans Rhythm Kings, Bix's best records are those he made with a small jazz band, Dixieland in form except for Rollini's prominent bass sax. Two of the best sides in this group are Jazz Me Blues and At The Jazz Band Ball(not included in the album), favorite Dixieland tunes of Bix's Wolverine days. These were made, together with Royal Garden Blues, in October 1927. Except for Bix and Murray, the musicians are of inferior calibre, and the ensemble is clumsy and halting.Bix's solo on Jazz Me Blues has its impressive aspects, but it makes me wonder why his style is called "strictly legato". These notes are punched out in very staccato fashion; more than anything they lack that effortless command of the rhythm, the exciting suspension, which gives the hot style such fascination.

Royal Garden Blues and Goose Pimples were originally issued under the name of "New Orleans Lucky Seven" and never reissued until now. The former has some unusually good ensemble choruses, the usual Rank and Rollini solos, and a solidly constructed, original solo by Bix. Goose Pimples, similarly, has some excellent co-operation between Bix and Don Murray in the opening ensemble. Frank Signorelli's piano solo is extremely dull.

The two other couplings by Bix and his Gang in the album were made by a different combination, with Izzy Friedman on clarinet. Friedman plays some interesting stuff, on Louisiana for instance; he's horrible on Thou Swell. In this series we find Bix recording not Dixieland tunes, but hits from current shows,and in a much less spontaneous style. Louisiana is the best of the four sides. Thou Swell goes in for fancy tricks like the trombone-bass sax part, and Lennie Hayton's curious piano is heard amply. Bix makes some interesting tries in Wa Da Da, while this side and Ol' Man River show not only Bix's interest in modern classical harmony, but his dependence on a staccato style in moments of stress.

In For No Reason At All In C Bix, on piano, and Eddie Lang on guitar, accompany Frank Trumbauer's C-melody sax.Why Trumbauer should be considered either a hot musician or in the least an interesting one, I can't say. As for Bix's piano and Lang's guitar, they're competent and harmonically inventive. But the swing isn't there.

The album comes to a sad conclusion with Whiteman's sad Sweet Sue. Bix's chorus stands out cleanly among all this phony gingerbread and after Jack Fulton's mushy vocal; but his tone is soft and straight, and except for an interesting idea or two there's nothing of value.

* * *

FRANK TESCHEMACHER Co Album C-43

CHARLES PIERCE Co 35950
and his Orchestra

NOBODY'S SWEETHEART
SISTER KATE

Personnel for first side: Muggsy Spanier, cornet; Jack Reed, trombone; Frank Teschemacher,clarinet; Ralph Rudder, tenor sax; Charles Pierce, 3rd sax; Danny Lipscomb, piano; Stuart Branch, guitar; Jim Lanigan,bass; Paul Kettler, drums. For second side, see text below.

McKENZIE & CONDON'S
CHICAGOANS Co 35951-2

CHINA BOY
SUGAR

NOBODY'S SWEETHEART
LIZA

Jimmy McPartland, cornet; Frank Teschemacher, clarinet; Bud Freeman, tenor sax; Joe Sullivan, piano; Eddie Condon, banjo; Jim Lanigan, bass; Gene Krupa, drums.

MIFF MOLE Co 35953
and his Little Molers

SHIM-ME-SHA-WABBLE
ONE STEP TO HEAVEN

Red Nichols, cornet; Miff Mole, trombone; Frank Teschemacher,clarinet; Joe Sullivan, piano; Eddie Condon, banjo; Gene Krupa, drums.

Like Bix, Frank Teschemacher died in his twenties. And around Tesch and his friends, too, there has grown a legend: a less fantastic one and better justified than Bix's, but no less harmful to sane judgment.

Panassie's invention of a "Chicago style" and his enshrinement of Tesch as the greatest of all clarinetists, widely accepted at first, is now suffering the inevitable reaction. But the Chicago myth must be corrected, not discarded. There are two jobs to be done: we must see Tesch and his fellow "Chicagoans" in the proper historical perspective, and hear the music they left on records.

In Chicago, in Prohibition times, the New Orleans hot men and their music had found more favorable conditions. There was a fresh audience, more money, a chance to put their jazz on records. The diffusion-center of jazz shifted from New Orleans to Chicago, and musicians from all over the middle west and south felt the influence. We call this the Chicago period because musicians, white and colored alike, were drawn to the city which had become jazz' adopted home.

Surrounded by this brilliant and vigorous music, the young white musicians of Chicago could not fail to be affected. In varying degrees depending on their circumstances and temperament, they approved enthusiastically and formed their music on the same pattern. Besides the small group which later came to be known as "the Chicagoans" there were scores of other talented and hardworking musicians. They weren't all from Chicago and they didn't all stay in Chicago. But that was the center; and so Chicago came to be a symbol of jazz for the twenties.

There were important differences, too. The influence of Bix was strong on musicians like McPartland, Goodman, even Tesch. They introduced the saxophone, frowned upon in most New Orleans combinations, and thus changed the whole nature of jazz ensemble. Their rhythm sections were different, and they had their own approach to the beat.

Jazz was an adopted language, for them. At the same time jazz was losing its hold on popular taste, becoming more and more a "musician's music". For these reasons the new crop of hot men tended to be more serious, more self-conscious, less relaxed than their predecessors.

They couldn't carve the colored boys -- there never was a record made in Chicago or anywhere else that could touch the Olivers, the Hot Fives and Sevens. But Eddie Condon and Red McKenzie had "contacts", so some of the boys could make records. Unfortunately the grouping of "Chicago style" records, promulgated by Panassie and continued by Delaunay, has no sensible basis. Columbia has fittingly issued an album of these records under the name of Frank Teschemacher.

For some of the most inspiring music came from Tesch's clarinet. Just "a kid who was learning," Tesch showed a doubtful technique, a curious illegitimate tone. But he played with unshakeable confidence and incredible heat; he had a masterful sense for unorthodox harmony, strange tonalities and melodic invention.

Tesch, as we hear him on records, is not a finished musician: it would be absurd to compare him to the Johnny Dodds of Canal Street and Gutbucket Blues. Tesch never fitted into an ensemble as effortlessly as Dodds, Noone or Simeon; he hadn't the background or the serenity to play a bare, profoundly moving blues chorus. What he did have, to a greater extent perhaps than any other clarinetist we know, was a deep, nervous intensity which gives both solo and ensemble playing a breathtaking air of stark creation. That's why Tesch, a fragmentary genius in a sense, deserves his particular niche in the jazz academy.

We hear today that Tesch often played "out of tune" -- proof, to anyone who thinks Buster Bailey is a great hot clarinet, that Tesch was an inferior musician. Certainly he often played notes that don't exist in the normal European scale. But how have we managed to listen to jazz so long without learning that scales are what you make them? Whether Tesch had an "unconscious hankering for the quarter-tone scale", however, seems to me quite open to argument. Rod Cless, listening to Omer Simeon's clarinet ornamenting a Jelly Roll Morton ensemble, said: "That's the way Tesch used to play when he was right." But we've been told many times that Tesch didn't care very much when he was scolded for his "bad tone" and "bad intonation". He was after other things first.

The first records he played on were made for Paramount in 1927 by Charles Pierce's orchestra. The Pierce band was a rather half-baked affair, and

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Commodore will also release the three new JAZZ INFORMATION reissues announced elsewhere in this magazine, after the J.I. Limited Editions have been entirely sold out. These are:

UHCA 79-80, Ollie Powers' PLAY THAT THING and Grant - Wilson's COME ON COOT AND DO THAT THING.

UHCA 85-86, Ma Rainey's SEE SEE RIDER BLUES and JEALOUS HEARTED BLUES.

UHCA 77-78, King Oliver's DIPPER MOUTH BLUES and the Red Onion Jazz Babies' CAKE WALKING BABIES FROM HOME.

For personnels and further information on the new U.H.C.A. releases , see the Limited Edition notices in this issue of JAZZ INFORMATION.

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their records are half-baked too. The Columbia album includes two Pierce sides -- one of which, Sister Kate, has just been discovered to feature neither Tesch nor Muggsy Spanier. For a review of Sister Kate and its original coupling Jazz Me Blues, see my column in the February 21st J.I. Except that Morry Bercov, a clarinetist like Tesch in some ways, and Charlie Altiere, a mediocre cornet player, replaced Tesch and Muggsy for the date, what was written then still holds true.

The Pierce Nobody's Sweetheart is the best recording by that band after Bull Frog Blues (still available on U.H.C.A. 1-2). The personnel is said to be the same except that a trombone player, Jack Reed, was added. The unison ensembles are without interest. Accompanied only by the rhythm section, in which Branch's banjo and Kettler's drums are prominent, Tesch plays a full chorus solo, followed by the cornetist for an equal period. The final chorus is split between a trombone solo and a jammed ensemble in which clarinet and trombone play excellently and the cornet (is it really Muggsy?) is hardly audible.

As for Tesch's solo, which is the meat of the record, it repays hard listening. Departing entirely from the melody (compare the cornetist's free improvisation on the melody), Tesch produces profoundly new and exciting music, daring but logical. Solos like this,brought from the fruitful soil of the jazz ensemble by individual genius, explain the opinion held by Roger Pryor Dodge and others, that the hot solo is the important thing in jazz. I don't agree. Listen to Tesch in the last half-chorus.

After one more Paramount Date with Muggsy (the Jungle Kings,U.H.C.A. 34), Tesch appeared on the four sides recorded for Okeh by the McKenzie-Condon Chicagoans (December,1927; reissued in 1937 on U.H.C.A.). Here we find a seven-piece band with a powerful and remarkably mobile rhythm section. Joe Sullivan was a fully developed and solid pianist; Krupa a sensitive and usually restrained drummer. Eddie Condon's banjo was simple but effective, and Jim Lanigan's complex bass-thumping kept up a stirring accompaniment.

Besides Tesch there were Bud Freeman, on tenor sax, and one other melody instrument. The cornet was played by Jimmy McPartland, whose chief influence was Bix and who played here with something of the same tone,economy and lightness. To realize the effect of McPartland's lead you must go to the immensely superior Chicago Rhythm Kings record (available on U.H.C.A.), where Muggsy Spanier plays cornet in an almost identical band.

The greatest value of the McKenzie-Condon records, like the others in this album, lies in Tesch's playing. Other soloists make interesting contributions, too; and the ensembles, with their sour tone and sudden bursts of fury, are appealing in spite of their inferiority to many other groups.

China Boy begins in fast tempo with an interesting ensemble, followed by Sullivan's hard-punching piano solo. Then a tenor solo, in the same gruff style Mezz, too, played at that time; with four bars of stop-chords and slapped bass to break it. After McPartland's short solo Tesch plays a striking, dissonant bit before the final ensemble. I don't find this ensemble entirely admirable; it's too feverish and hasty.But the three-part polyphony is absorbing, and we may note too how Tesch's amazing clarinet part stands out over McPartland's lead.

Sugar is slower, more relaxed -- a rather sentimental version, indeed, of this favorite pop tune. Except at the close the ensembles are uninteresting, and most of the solos hardly better. Both verse and chorus are played in an uninspired straight ensemble style, which doesn't help matters.What saves the record is Tesch's quite remarkable playing in a few spots and in the last chorus.

For Liza, another verse-and-chorus job, Lanigan shifted to tuba, making a startling change in the band's sound. His tuba playing is simpler but just as effective as his string bass work. The long ensemble beginning, with its byplay between McP. and Tesch, leads into a charming, light and very Beiderbeckian cornet solo. Tesch's more intense clarinet solo leads into a very well-balanced ensemble passage, to which cornet, clarinet and tenor contribute importantly. Then comes a short unison ensemble and they return to jazz ensemble with renewed strength, Tesch especially playing astonishingly against McPartland's lead.

Nobody's Sweetheart, too, opens with unison ensemble, but this soon gives way to one of Tesch's creative, melodic solos. McPartland's flatter tone brings contrast in a good solo, and the band comes in once more in an ensemble passage over exciting rhythm. Bud plays a tenor solo and the band finishes off in a rough ensemble. The well-known "Chicago" effect of bringing a climax in the middle of the ensemble, followed by another, appears here, though it isn't carried off quite perfectly.

The fourth record in the album, by Miff Mole's Little Molers, has four of the "Chicagoans" playing with Mole and Red Nichols. This led the eminent critic Paul Eduard Miller (the same who sees the future of jazz in Raymond Scott) to remark that it's the latter two, and not the others, who typify the real jazz musician. One Step To Heaven, of course, is the discovery which appeared first as Windy City Stomp on the H.R.S. label. Shim-Me-Sha-Wabble had been previously reissued by U.H.C.A.; we can thank Columbia for giving us the most convenient coupling, in this case.

That Nichols and (especially) Mole were competent musicians nobody denies; and with the four "amateurs" from Chicago, they produced two excellent sides. Shim-Me, the fascinating Clarence Williams tune, gets fine treatment. The ensembles have their confused moments, and Miff's complex (never tail-gate)trombone backgrounds make them quite different from the McKenzie-Condon band. Tesch has two solo choruses, using the first to whip up steam for the stompy second chorus, supported by Krupa's pounding drum. The only other solo is a gliding, unusually hot trombone chorus by Mole; the rest of the record is arranged and improvised ensemble.

One Step is equally interesting in spite of its popular song theme. Tesch is heard throughout in beautiful ensemble playing, and turns in another remarkable solo; again Mole is the other soloist.

* * *

HOT TROMBONES Co Album C-46

THE CHOCOLATE DANDIES Co 36008

DEE BLUES
BUGLE CALL RAG

GOT ANOTHER SWEETIE NOW Co 36009

Featuring Jimmy Harrison, trombone.

EDDIE CONDON Co 36009
and his Orchestra

TENNESSEE TWILIGHT

Featuring Floyd O'Brien, trombone.

JACK TEAGARDEN Co 36010
and the Whoopee Makers

MAKIN' FRIENDS

MIFF MOLE Co 36010
and his Little Molers

ORIGINAL DIXIELAND ONE-STEP

J. C. HIGGINBOTHAM Co 36011
and his Six Hicks

HIGGINBOTHAM BLUES

BENNY MORTON Co 36011
and his Orchestra

THE GOLD DIGGERS' SONG

This album is regrettable for two excellent reasons. In the first place, the choice of six men to represent "hot trombone" style is bound to raise objections everywhere. My own objection, for instance, is that the authentic hot trombone style is represented by such men as Kid Ory, Dutrey, Brunies, Pecora, etc.; and that even among the modern swing trombones, Columbia's choice is questionable. There will be other objections on different grounds. They could have all been eliminated simply by not putting out a "Hot Trombones" album.

In the second place, an album like this necessarily introduces annoying and confusing cross-couplings. What about Madame Dynamite, the original coupling of Tennessee Twilight? And Higgy's Telephone Number, which is at least as good as Higginbotham Blues? Why shouldn't Makin' Friends appear on a single record or in a Teagarden album, instead of coupled with a Miff Mole record? The disadvantages of this album, to my mind, more than outweight its few advantages.

The three Chocolate Dandies sides are from the same session as the previously reissued Goodbye Blues and Cloudy Skies, which I reviewed in the February 7th issue. Dee Blues and Bugle Call Rag, the best sides of the date, have been reissued before on U. H. C. A. The third title was never before available in the United States. The soloists are the important thing in these records. The arrangements, sketched by Benny Carter or worked up spontaneously, serve only to display the solos better and fill in between them. The Chocolate Dandies don't play ensemble jazz.

Bugle Call Rag features good solos by Bobby Stark on trumpet, Coleman Hawkins'tenor and Benny Carter's fine clarinet. Outstanding, however, is Harrison's sensational solo: simple an unpretentious, but intense and played with Jimmy's superb warm tone and exciting shake. The same is true of the trombone solo in Dee Blues, which illustrates also the strong similarity between Harrison and Jack Teagarden. On this side, notice how fine musicians can play excellent solos in a "blues" and yet fail to put across a consistent blues feeling.

Coleman Hawkins' long and complicated tenor solo, Harrison's innocuous singing and Bobby Stark's sharp, effective trumpet feature Sweetie; no trombone solo. Why is this side included in a "Hot Trombones" album?

I can't report on the second master of Tennessee Twilight,since my review copy was pressed from the original master; I presume this mistake has been corrected. Like its neglected coupling Madame Dynamite, this side was made at the Eel -- Home Cooking session. O'Brien's solo is the thing he does so well: a low, soft, lazy chorus with gruff and appealing accents. Pee Wee Russell and the rest do their part, and the Alex Hill arrangement is excellent. I might add that the original master of Twilight is available on U.H.C.A. with its proper coupling, Madame Dynamite -- which features, incidentally, a more impressive O'Brien chorus.

The present recording of Makin' Friends was recorded in February, 1929, and originally issued on Banner under the pseudonym of the "Kentucky Grasshoppers". This version has a slight edge on both the familiar Condon Okeh version and the other Whoopee Makers recording (Dirty Dog) reissued by the U.H.C.A. Teagarden sings and plays his familiar blues, which originated in Louis' You're Next,with great feeling. The only other soloist is Jimmy McPartland,playing excellent cornet.

Original Dixieland One-Step is recorded by a typical Red Nichols-Miff Mole combination. It isn't very Dixielandish, consisting mainly of solos by clarinetist Fud Livingston, Mole, and Nichols. Those who have neglected this school of recording artists in favor of the more vital groups may be surprised not only by Mole's fantastically effortless and melodic trombone,but by Fud's excellent clarinet.

Higginbotham Blues, previously reissued by H. R. S., was recorded by a Luis Russell group for Okeh. This very well-known side features Higginbotham at his most violent, using his direct and amazingly inventive style to the best advantage. It's a far cry from this to the sort of thing Higgy plays today. If the coda reminds you of Organ Grinder's Swing, ask Will Hudson where he got the idea for his hit tune of a few years ago. Henry Allen's trumpet and Charlie Holmes' alto are the other fine features of Higginbotham Blues.

Benny Morton's own recording of Gold Diggers' Song is perhaps most interesting for its revival of a completely forgotten hit-tune of post-depression days ("We're in the money ..."). The record, thoroughly arranged and rather heavy, isn't very impressive. Solos are by Morton's trombone, expert in tone and style, Ted MacRae's tenor (he plays Happy Caldwell's striking style) and Henry Allen's trumpet.

* * *

DORSEY BROTHERS Co Album C-51

JIMMY DORSEY Co 36063

PRAYIN' THE BLUES
OODLES OF NOODLES

Clarinet and alto sax solos,accomppanied by the Dorsey Brothers' Orchestra.

ORIGINAL MEMPHIS FIVE Co 36064

JAZZ ME BLUES
ANYTHING

Phil Napoleon, trumpet; Tommy Dorsey, trombone; Jimmy Dorsey, clarinet and alto sax; Frank Signorelli, piano; Ted Napoleon, drums.

DORSEY BROTHERS ORCHESTRA

I'M GETTIN' SENTIMENTAL OVER YOU
BY HECK Co 36065

SHIM-SHAM-SHIMMY
MOOD HOLLYWOOD Co 36066

Probably Columbia's hot jazz classic catalog might have been considered

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incomplete (by some people) without a selection of Dorsey Brothers records. But this is the distaff side of jazz, of course; the reissues vary from bad to middling,and none of them is really good or important.

The Dorsey boys belong to that group of Eastern white musicians who never dug down to the bottom of what jazz is, and whose playing is at best a pale and second-handed reflection of the real thing. We don't deny that both brothers - trombonist Tommy especially - have become very accomplished technicians by years of hard and sincere work.But that has nothing to do with the essential quality of their music.

Jimmy's clarinet and alto sax solos were recorded, respectively, for Okeh in 1929 and for Brunswick in 1932 (the latter is a second master). Prayin' The Blues is better, showing a real attempt at blues feeling and some good melodic inventions. But the ease and effortless phrasing of a really good clarinet player are lacking. On alto, Jimmy was very inferior at that time.

The two Memphis Five sides have Napoleon and Signorelli; otherwise, they have little connection with the old and mostly negligible recordings of that group. Made for Columbia in 1931, they show the small band at its best in the attractive sweet tune Anything, while their Jazz Me Blues is rather stiff and lifeless, with weak rhythm and enervating arranged passages.

Jazz Me Blues, nevertheless, is probably the best side in the album. Few records are duller, from the hot point of view, than the Brunswicks by the Dorsey Brothers Orchestra which complete the album. Mood Hollywood and Shim Sham Shimmy (recorded March, 1933 -- the former a different master) features Bunny Berigan, Fulton McGrath, Dick McDonough and others in addition to the Dorseys. Berigan has a long solo in surprisingly simple style on Shimmy, which would sound better in a freer band. But the arrangements are intricate, inoffensive enough, and entirely unimpressive. And without the arrangements these sides are nothing.

By Heck, with Manny Klein's capable trumpet, is closer to what the Dorseys were trying to achieve -- smooth, danceable and moderately interesting music. The Sentimental is a pleasant version of the tune which later became famous as T. Dorsey's theme. Both sides of this coupling are second masters.

SANTO "PECK" PECORA Co 36159
and his Back Room Boys

MAGNOLIA BLUES
I NEVER KNEW WHAT A GAL COULD DO

Shorty Sherock, cornet; Santo Pecora, trombone; Meyer Weinberg, clarinet; Stanley Wrightsman, piano; Frank Frederico, guitar; Thurman Teague, bass; Riley Scott, drums and vocal.

Recorded April 22, 1937, but never previously issued, these are two good light Dixieland sides by a band under the direction of Santo Pecora. "Peck", like his fellow New Orleans veteran George Brunies, played trombone with the original New Orleans Rhythm Kings, continuing the tradition of Tom Brown and "Daddy" Edwards. Though a somewhat more polished musician than Brunies, he hasn't forgotten the old tail-gate style, and shows it once more on this record. The other men in the band are competent, not outstanding. Shorty Sherock plays clear, clean lead cornet and Weinberg is a good ensemble clarinet.

Magnolia Blues is a relaxed medium blues, beginning with a phrase from Mecca Flat, with two choruses sung by drummer Scott and good solos by Weinberg and Wrightsman before the final all-in chorus. I Never Knew is the Elmer Schoebel composition, familiar in the Okeh version by the N.O.R.K. with Pecora, Paul Mares and Leon Rappolo. An even better example of Pecora's ensemble style, it features a strong trombone solo after Weinberg's weak clarinet chorus, and good jazz ensemble except for Sherock's ending, which is in rather bad taste.

LOUIS ARMSTRONG Co Album C-57
and his Hot Five

GUT BUCKET BLUES
YES I'M IN THE BARREL Co 36152

MUSKRAT RAMBLE
SKID-DAT-DE-DAT Co 36153

CORNET CHOP SUEY
MY HEART Co 36154

YOU'RE NEXT
ORIENTAL STRUT Co 36155

Louis Armstrong, cornet; Kid Ory, trombone; Johnny Dodds, clarinet; Lil Armstrong, piano; Johnny St. Cyr, banjo.

At last, Columbia presents an album which will gratify the soul of every good jazz man. With the release of this indispensable set, eight of the wonderful Armstrong Hot Five sides move from the class of high-priced collectors' items to permanent availability at a moderate price. True, fifteen Hot Five sides remain to be reissued; but this is a grand beginning, and a heartening example of what the Columbia program at its best can mean.

In the autumn of 1925 Louis returned to Chicago to play at the Dreamland. In his two and a half years of recording he had piled up a heap of wax — eighteen records with King Oliver, as many again with the Blue Five and Red Onion Jazz Babies, a sheaf of Fletcher Hendersons and the memorable blues accompaniments on Paramount and Columbia. Neither Louis nor anyone else was ever to surpass the beauty and variety of what he had already done; but new and great achievements were to come.

Louis assembled a five-piece recording band and the first Hot Five date was held November 12, 1925. The group was almost the smallest possible, but it could swing out with a force and spirit which put to shame the overstuffed combinations of those times and today.

Two of the musicians had played alongside Louis in the Oliver band: Lil Hardin (who had married Louis not long before), a solid rhythm pianist and a great asset to the band because of her musical knowledge; and Johnny Dodds, perhaps the only clarinet player who could complement Louis' cornet perfectly. The trombone was Kid Ory, who had come from California to join the enlarged Oliver band. On banjo there was Johnny St. Cyr, whose sure and flexible rhythm was the foundation of many New Orleans and Chicago combinations.

All, excepting Lil, were from New Orleans. The Okeh recording officials gave them a moderately free hand; and the result was a series of spontaneous, exciting and unforgettable sides in the New Orleans tradition. They were less typically New Orleans than such records as the New Orleans Bootblacks', because they were in a sense more ambitious. But the beat was hard and authentic, the spirit contagious, four of the five musicians unexcelled masters of their instruments. It's hardly surprising that the Armstrong Hot Fives are among the most valued of all the great records that were made in the twenties.

Typical of the whole series was the first issued, Gutbucket Blues. The record began with an exciting, solo banjo introduction while Louis called out: "Oh, play that thing, Mr. St. Cyr, Lawd ... you know you can do it ... Ev'r'body from New Orleans can really do that thing ... hey, hey!"

The banjo came down to its twelfth bar and the band broke in for the opening ensemble chorus: swinging over Ory's sliding notes with their hoarse brass sound and powerful swing; led by the cornet in middle register with its grand open tone, effortless drive and melodic appeal; Dodds' clarinet filling in between with quick, graceful figures in a warm, fluid voice; the two rhythm instruments contributing their percussive impact.

Two choruses of this, and Lil took her solo — "Aw, whip that thing, Miss Lil ... whip it kid ... aw, pick that pianna, yeah!" No keyboard tinkling, just the solid chords and the beat. Then Ory's gruff, slippery solo, a beautiful example of what the tailgate style could do by itself — "Aw blow it Kid Ory, blow it kid .... you know you can really blow that thing, boy."

Then, as the tension increased, the banjo took up a new, almost savage beat, and Louis nearly shouted: "Blow that thing, Mr. Johnny Dodds .... Aw, toot that clarinet, boy!" One of Johnby Dodds' finest solos, twelve bars of the best jazz clarinet there ever was.

The last solo exhibition, of course, was Louis': a rising phrase and a descending one with its last note blurring down to the minor third. Kid Ory took up the commentary with "Oh, do that thing, Papa Dip ... Ooh, oohm, that sure feels good —" and the ensemble returned for a heartfelt performance of a riff often massacred since. The last word was Louis', with a lashing, slurred coda.

Nothing like this had ever been heard on wax. The only band records which could compare with Gutbucket Blues were the King Olivers, with their emphasis on a heavier, less flexible ensemble drive and fewer solos. Combining a happy informality with an overwhelming display of the solo and ensemble **talents** of Armstrong, Dodds and Ory, the Hot Fives showed new possibilities in the great New Orleans tradition.

Yes I'm In The Barrel, like Gutbucket and the other tunes in the album, was an original piece by one of the Fivers — in these two cases, Louis himself. The Barrel opened with a long, appealing solo on muted cornet against three-to-the-bar stop chords, by the rest of the band. The free ensemble passage which follows swings mightily; then a planned ensemble in which Dodds and Ory accompany Louis' lead with variations, and two solo choruses on clarinet. These suffer from weak recording of Dodds' broad, expressive tone, but still rank among his best jobs on the blues. The ending is ensemble, with breaks by Ory and Armstrong; one of the most powerful, in its compelling swing and joyous polyphony, of all the Hot Five ensembles.

Muskrat Ramble (the correct title now appears to be Muskat, but to my mind it's a bit too late to change it now) is the Ory original which has become a favorite with all Dixieland combinations. More characteristically "New Orleans" than most of the Armstrongs, Muskrat contains some of the most ferociously ecstatic jazz ensemble ever recorded, and some of Louis' and Ory's best playing. The cornet solo is flowing and exuberant; in the sensational closing ensemble, Louis uses a rare growl to emphasize even more the biting push of his lead. Like the Hot Seven's Ory's Creole Trombone, this side is a memorable example of the ensemble shout a band could get with Louis' superbly confident, rhythmically intricate lead, Ory's revolving, grunting bass, and Dodds' unobtrusive but essential third part.

Skid-Dat-De-Dat, very different in construction and mood, is no less fine. Built on a slow, simple, minor phrase, it combines superb breaks by all the soloists with moving blues choruses in a tightly formed, effective whole. The emotional nuances are astonishingly subtle and varied. Here Louis not only plays beautiful horn, but (as in Heebie Jeebies — see the first Columbia Armstrong album for this orphaned Hot Five) uses his amazing vocal instrument in powerful, grotesquely humorous phrases.

Cornet Chop Suey, on the other hand, is almost entirely a show-piece for Louis' cornet. Except for a piano so-

RECORD AUCTION!

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Auction closes November 21, 1941. Records will be sent at close of auction C.O.D. No bids accepted lower than minimum bids as listed.

PART I - The following records are all in NEW condition.

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I'm Gonna Gitcha - Don't Forget to Mess Around	OK 8343	2.00
Jazz Lips - Skid Dat De Dat	OK 8436	1.50
Irish Black Bottom - You Made Me Love You	OK 8447	2.50
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Keyhole Blues - Melancholy Blues	OK 8496	1.50
Potato Head Blues - Put 'Em Down Blues	OK 8503	1.50
Weary Blues - That's When I'll Come Back To You	OK 8519	1.50
Savoy Blues - Hotter Than That	OK 8535	1.00
I'm Not Rough - Got No Blues	OK 8551	1.50
Once In A While - Struttin' With Some Barbecue	OK 8566	1.50
Two Deuces - Squeeze Me	OK 8641	1.25
No One Else But You - I Can't Give You Anything But Love	OK 8669	1.00
Knockin' A Jug - Muggles	OK 8703	1.50
Dallas Blues - Bessie Couldn't Help It	OK 8774	1.00
Blue Again - When Your Lover Has Gone	OK 41498	1.00
ARMSTRONG ACCOMPANIMENTS (Hociel Thomas)		
Listen To Ma - G'wan I Told You	OK 8346	3.00
Gamblers' Dream - Washwoman Blues (slight skip in vocal; does not affect Armstrong)	OK 8289	1.50
ARMSTRONG ACCOMPANIMENTS (Maggie Jones)		
Anybody Here Want To Try My Cabbage	Co 14063	1.50
Nobody Knows The Way I Feel This Mornin'	Co 14058	1.50
PERRY BRADFORD'S JAZZ PHOOLS: Lucy Long - I Ain't Gonna Play	Vo 15165	3.50
BIX BEIDERBECKE & HIS GANG: Wa Da Da - Ol' Man River	OK 41088	1.00
JIMMY BLYTHE'S OWLS: Have Mercy - Hot Stuff	Vo 1136	1.00
CELLAR BOYS: Wailing Blues - Barrelhouse Stomp	Vo 1503	3.00
CHICAGO RHYTHM KINGS: Madame Dynamite - Tennessee Twilight	BrF 500406	1.00
CHOCOLATE DANDIES: Krazy Kapers - Once Upon A Time	OK 41568	1.00
JOHNNY DODDS (clarinet solo): Oh Daddy	Para 12471	2.50
BUD FREEMAN: Crazeology - Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man	OK 41168	1.00
BENNY GOODMAN: Muscrat Ramble - After Awhile	Br 4968	1.50
FLETCHER HENDERSON & HIS ORCHESTRA:		
Stockholm Stomp - Have It Ready	Br 3460	1.00
New King Porter	OK 41565	1.00
JOE WINGY MANNONE & HIS CLUB ROYAL ORCHESTRA: Isn't There A Little Love - Trying To Stop My Crying	Vo 15797	7.50
DIXIE RHYTHM KINGS (Simeon): The Chant - Congo Love Song	Br 7115	2.50
ARCADIAN SERENADERS: San Sue Strut - Bobbed Haired Bobbie	OK 40378	1.00
NEW ORLEANS LUCKY SEVEN: Goose Pimples - Royal Garden Blues	OK 8544	1.00
JIMMY NOONE'S APEX CLUB ORCH: Sweet Sue - I Know That You Know	Vo 1184	1.50
BESSIE SMITH: Do Your Duty - I'm Down In The Dumps	OK 8945	1.00
JABBO SMITH: Tanguay Blues - Boston Skuffle	Br 7101	1.50
PINE TOP SMITH: Pine Top Blues - Pine Top's Boogie Woogie	Vo 1245	1.50
I'm Sober Now - I Got More Sense Than That	Vo 1266	1.50

PART II

Records listed as "n" (new); "ln" (like new); "e" (excellent); "Vg" (very good); "g" (good).

LOUIS ARMSTRONG: Gut Bucket Blues - Yes, I'm In The Barrel	OK 8261	g	$1.00
Cornet Chop Suey - My Heart	OK 8320	e	1.00
Monday Date - Sugar Foot Strut	OK 8609	vg	1.00
ARMSTRONG ACCOMPANIMENTS (MAGGIE JONES)			
Poor House Blues - Thunderstorm Blues	Co 14050	e	1.00
Good Time Flat Blues - Screamin' The Blues	Co 14055	ln	1.00
ARMSTRONG ACCOMPANIMENTS (COOT GRANT & WILSON)			
Come On Coot - Have Your Chill	Pa 12317	g	1.00
LIL'S HOT SHOTS: Georgia Bo Bo - Drop That Sack	Vo 1037	g	2.00
PERRY BRADFORD'S JAZZ PHOOLS: Lucy Long - I Ain't Gonna Play	Vo 15165	vg	2.00
BUCKTOWN FIVE: Mobile Blues - Someday Sweetheart	Ge 5405	e	1.00
Steady Roll - Really A Pain	Ge 5419	g	1.00
Hot Mittins	Ge 5518	n	1.00
BIX BEIDERBECKE: In A Mist - Wringin' And Twistin'	OK 40916	ln	1.00
COW COW DAVENPORT & SAM THEARD: That'll Get It - I'm Gonna	Vo 1408	n	0.50
JOHNNY DODDS: San - Clarinet Wobble	Br 3574	e	1.00
Wild Man Blues (25) - Melancholy (28)	Br 3567	e	1.00
Wild Man Blues (25) - Melancholy (27)	Br 3567	e	1.00

FRIARS SOCIETY ORCH. & NEW ORLEANS RHYTHM KINGS:			
Farewell Blues - Oriental	Ge 4966	e	$1.00
Bugle Call - Discontented Blues	Ge 4967	e	1.00
Panama - Tiger Rag	Ge 4968	g	1.00
Eccentric	Ge 5009	e	1.00
Weary Blues - Wolverine Blues (b & b)	Ge 5102	vg	1.00
Weary Blues - Wolverine Blues (b & a)	Ge 5102	g	1.00
Sweet Lomin' Man - Maple Leaf Rag (a & b)	Ge 5104	e	1.00
Sweet Lovin' Man - Maple Leaf Rag (- & b)	Ge 5104	n	2.00
Sweet Lovin' Man - Maple Leaf Rag (- & b)	Ge 5104	g	1.00
Tin Roof Blues - That's A Plenty (a & a)	Ge 5105	n	1.00
Tin Roof Blues - That's A Plenty (b & a)	Ge 5105	e	1.00
Milenberg Joys - Marguerite	Ge 5217	n	2.50
Milenberg Joys - Marguerite	Ge 5217	e	1.00
Mr. Jelly Lord - Clarinet Marmalade (a & a)	Ge 5220	e	1.50
Mr. Jelly Lord - Clarinet Marmalade (a & a)	Ge 5220	vg	1.00
London Blues - Mad	Ge 5221	ln	1.50
London Blues - Mad	Ge 5221	e	1.00
FLETCHER HENDERSON'S ORCHESTRA: Copenhagen - Words	Vo 14926	n	1.50
Copenhagen - Words	Vo 14926	e	1.00
Memphis Bound - When You Do	Vo 15030	e	1.00
Some Of These Days - Baby Won't You	Vo 1079	vg	1.00
LOUISIANA RHYTHM KINGS: Hallucinations - Skinners Sock	Vo 15729	e	1.50
KANSAS CITY FRANK: Pass The Jug - Jelly Roll Stomp	Br 7062	e	1.00
McKENZIE & CONDON'S CHICAGOANS: Sugar - China Boy	OK 41011	e	2.00
KING OLIVER'S CREOLE JAZZ BAND: Dipper Mouth - Weather Bird	Ge 5132	e	2.00
Canal St. Blues - Just Gone	Ge 5133	e	2.00
Mandy Lee Blues - I'm Goin' Away	Ge 5134	g	1.00
Chimes Blues - Froggie Moore	Ge 5135	e	3.00
Snake Rag	Ge 5184	e	2.00
Krooked Blues - Alligator Hop	Ge 5274	e	3.00
Sugar Foot - Milenberg (N.O.R.K.) - rough start	Ge 3076	g	1.00
ORIGINAL DIXIELAND JAZZ BAND: Ostrich Walk - Tiger Rag	Ae 1206	e	2.50
Oriental Jazz	Ae 12097	e	2.00
Toddlin' Blues - Some Of These Days	OK 4738	g	1.00
Tiger Rag - Barnyard Blues	OK 4841	e	1.50
FATS WALLER: Birmingham Blues - Muscle Shoals	OK 4757	e	1.50
FATS WALLER ACCOMPANIMENT (CAROLINE JOHNSON):			
Mamma's Losin' - Ain't Got Nobody To Grind	Ge 3307	g	1.00

JOEL DUROE, 5153 ROCKLAND AVENUE, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

lo by Lil, the record consists of an exhibition of Louis' prowess in leading the ensemble, breaks, and a long, breathtaking stop-time passage. As an exhibition of horn technique without sacrificing the music itself, this is remarkable even today. My Heart, coupled with it on the reissue, returns to jazz ensemble as such, and produces a more pleasing structure. Like Muskrat Ramble, the ensembles here are unified and intricately melodic. Johnny Dodds plays a fine solo in low register.

The spectacular Oriental Strut and You're Next complete the album. The latter is a blues; the theme, as Louis plays it on solo cornet, is the one which Jack Teagarden used so many times afterwards in Makin' Friends and other tunes. A long ensemble which Louis leads with majestic calm and beautiful, full tone leads into solos by Lil and Johnny and a concluding ensemble. Oriental Strut features another of Louis' striking stop-time solos, even more impressive than that in Cornet Chop Suey.

All these records are rough, not one without faults in execution. That doesn't matter much. They take their place alongside the Hot Sevens, the Olivers and the blues accompaniments: the records in which Armstrong's unsurpassed personal talent is combined with other fine talents to make jazz at its best, in the authentic way.

Most of the sides in the album are re-recordings, so well done that they can be detected only by direct comparison with an original copy. Cornet Chop Suey appears to be the same dub originally reissued by H.R.S.; but for Oriental Strut and You're Next, which were also dubbed and reissued by the H.R.S., Columbia was fortunate enough to find the original masters. Muskrat Ramble, too, is from the original master.

* * *

LOUIS AND EARL	Co Album C-73
WEATHER BIRD A MONDAY DATE	Co 36375
CHICAGO BREAKDOWN DON'T JIVE ME	Co 36376

WEST END BLUES
MUGGLES Co 36377

TIGHT LIKE THIS
HEAH ME TALKIN' TO YA Co 36378

Space for a review of this album is limited, since it appeared just as J.I. was going to press. It adds eight important sides to Columbia's growing Armstrong catalog. The best thing about it is the two previously unissued sides (four of the others had been reissued on Vocalion, one on H.R.S.); the worst thing is the blurb (credited to John Hammond and George Avakian - who did it?) which states:

"When Louis Armstrong and Earl Hines first started playing together ....a new jazz era was born... Armstrong had been recognized as the most vital trumpeter...but he was still an ensemble musician playing in bands to which he was an important driving force, not a musical creator... The sophistication and urbanity of Hines' style was an inspiration that freed Louis from any musical inhibitions he might have had.... In addition, the suave musicianship of..Don Redman became a motivating force in the Hot Five, with results that...even now are not out-dated...The greatest jazz records ever produced."

So, by implication, the older Hot Fives and Sevens are out-dated! Nothing could be further from the truth. Certainly Louis, when he dropped the Ory-Dodds band in favor of Hines, Redman and Zutty, was moving forward in the inexorable advance of jazz. But advance is not necessarily improvement. Don Redman's "suave musicianship" should be very dubiously accepted; there are plenty of good ears to which the Redman-arranged portions of some of these records are very "outdated"; and plenty of musicians who think Redman's influence was the beginning of Louis' change from a great hot man to a dazzling solo star and showman. There can be no caviling with Louis' stupendous performance on these records, but some people still prefer the Hot Fives and Sevens, in which it's band jazz, with the best possible musicians, to the Savoy Fives which had three fine musicians and some not-so-fine ones playing Mr. Redman's arrangements.

Jimmy Strong and Fred Robinson were far from equal to Johnny Dodds and Kid Ory; but the more important point is that they weren't even trying to play that way. The Hines-Armstrongs mark the first step away from the New Orleans tradition for Louis; the first small-band records in which Louis' own playing is overwhelmingly superior to that of his fellow-bandsmen. It's startling, and unfortunate, that this should be considered an improvement by any critic.

Don't Jive Me (recorded June 28, 1928, and never issued until now) is a typical Redman-arranged "Hot Five" (personnel: Armstrong, Hines, Zutty; Jimmy Strong, clarinet; Fred Robinson, trombone; Mancy Cara, banjo). The music is chopped up by fancy arranging into flashy spots of solo and ensemble. Louis' playing, in fine form and typical of the period, makes the side invaluable. Hines, too, plays powerfully and well. But the ensembles are only mediocre, the clarinet bad and the total effect rather confused.

Chicago Breakdown is something else again; an orphan side (recorded May 10, 1927) with an unusual band (here called Louis Armstrong's Hot Seven). The personnel, as given on the label, is Louis; Hines; Honore Dutrey, trombone; Boyd Atkins, soprano sax; Stomp Evans, baritone; and Rip Bassett, banjo. This does not explain the clarinet heard in the opening ensemble, or the faintly audible second trumpet, or the guy who hits a cymbal now and then.

The tune is a composition of Jelly Roll Morton (notice the very characteristic melodic ideas and the use of breaks in the ensemble chorus); when Dave Stuart played a test pressing for Jelly in Los Angeles shortly before the latter's death, the inventor of jazz, stomps and blues shouted: "Somebody stole my tune, and it damn well sounds like Louis!" (Anecdote by courtesy of William Russell.) The record is uneven: its melodic content is good, Hines and especially Armstrong play wonderfully, but the boring chorus split between soprano and baritone saxes, against weak stoptime chords, is an effective damper.

The record opens with a hard-hitting eight-bar piano introduction, followed by a full chorus of good ensemble with breaks by clarinet, sax and trombone; then Hines plays a fine half-chorus, unaccompanied; Louis turns in a grand, lyric half-chorus with stop-time by piano, banjo and cymbal. Then the murder begins: a sad half-chorus of Atkins' soprano, followed by Evans' more passible baritone. One and a half choruses of stop time are too much unless something good is hap-

(More reviews of reissues
on next page; this review
is continued on page 92.)

Other Columbia reissues which I am unwilling to review are two recently issued albums and several individual releases. The first album is dedicated to Teddy Wilson and Billie Holiday, including eight sides made for Brunswick in 1936 and 1937 with miscellaneous light swing pickup bands. Titles are Miss Brown To You, I Wished On The Moon, What A Little Moonlight Can Do, If You Were Mine, I Must Have That Man, Foolin' Myself, Easy Living, and When You're Smiling, with such musicians as Roy Eldridge, Buck Clayton, Jonah Jones, Benny Goodman, Ben Webster, Cosy Cole, etc. Album No. C-61.

Also available is album C-66, "Hot Trumpets". The sides are Trumbauer's I'm Coming Virginia (Bix), Miff Mole's Alexander's Ragtime Band (Nichols), McKenzie's Darktown Strutters Ball (Muggsy), Bessie's One And Two Blues (Joe Smith), Louis' Dear Old Southland, Henry Allen's Body And Soul, Ellington's Echoes Of Harlem (Cootie), and Wilson's Why Was I Born (Buck Clayton). You'll notice that this collection is even more of a hash than the "Hot Trombones" album. Very poor commercial effort, with next to no regard for real musical values.

Single reissues are 36157, Ellington's That Rhythm Man (unissued) and Mississippi Moan, and 36158, Norvo's Blues In E Flat and Bughouse. Popular Brunswick items are also being transferred to Columbia by dozens.

VICTOR REISSUE

JELLY ROLL MORTON Vi 27565
Piano solos

SEATTLE HUNCH
FREAKISH

In its new "Hot Piano" album (see page 54 — of the four records in it, this is the only reissue), Victor offers two piano solos by Jelly Roll Morton, recorded in 1929.

We have come to realize that the late Jelly Roll was a remarkable musician in many ways. Not the least important was his ability as a solo pianist. Playing the old-fashioned pre-Hines style, with a very strong ragtime influence, he used melodically delightful right-hand parts against a simple and powerful bass, with authentic spirit and an exacting sense of form. The beat was strong and direct.

Jelly was a very fine pianist; and his style, the oldtime "corny" piano, is the kind of piano playing properly associated with the best of orchestral jazz. Other things being equal, he could have played the piano part with the Oliver band or Louis' Hot Five, to the advantage of these groups. And his solo records were always interesting, for their wealth of unique musical content as well as their execution. We have gained a great deal by learning to place him at least as high as the less solid, more flashy pianists who followed him. This is not to say that there isn't room for a wide variety of styles in jazz piano; and I still find Hines wonderful, even though the Hines-Zutty Armstrongs are musically inferior to the Hot Fives and Sevens.

These two solos deserve a place on your shelf next to the two sides previously reissued on Bluebird. Jelly made only these four sides for Victor; to find more, look up the General album and, if you can find any, the old Gennetts. Seattle Hunch is particularly charming, while Freakish is a little less good because of its attempt to live up to its title.

SIGNATURE REISSUE

MEADE "LUX" LEWIS Si 65101
Piano solo.
HONKY TONK TRAIN BLUES

BLAKE and SPAND
Guitar and piano with talking

HASTINGS STREET

First, a warning. Both of these sides will be released shortly by Columbia, according to John Hammond. Dubbings were made some time ago, and Bob Thiele of Signature was so informed before he announced his reissue.

Signature's venture into the field of repressings, therefore, deserves less credit than its other efforts. If you buy this record on its obvious merits, you are paying double price for the privilege of obtaining it sooner.

But a reissue of Lewis' original Honky Tonk is most welcome, even though competing versions are available on Bluebird, Decca and Blue Note. Those who have discovered the endless and brilliant charms of Meade's fabulous composition would be glad of another recording even if it were not, as the Paramount version is, the best in many ways.

The extreme rarity of the original record was another strong argument in favor of reissuing it. Too bad that this dubbing, -- reported to have been made not from the original Paramount, but from a private repressing -- is not as good as it might have been. Music like the Honky Tonk, handicapped initially by poor recording, deserves the best possible reproduction.

The Paramount Honky Tonk, recorded about 1927, is more deliberate and better unified, less brilliant but deeper, than the better-known one on Victor-Bluebird. A slightly slower tempo permits more effective exploitation of the theme's rhythmic contrasts. Each version consists of ten twelve-bar choruses of fast blues, played over a rocky bass against which the right hand's multiple rhythms break. Based though it is on conventional blues-chord changes, the constantly rotating bass provides a harmonic kaleidoscope of great daring and originality.

The development of the theme is much the same in both versions, though there are one or two figures in each which don't appear in the other. The total effect, as everyone should know by now, is as striking and beautiful a piece of music as jazz has produced. Less descriptive than such a train blues as No. 29, the Honky Tonk Train Blues is nevertheless well named. It has a complex and irresistible motion, at once forward and within itself, for which the railroad train affords a familiar symbol. As for honky tonk music, this is it. Nothing could show less "classical" or "popular" influence, less false refinement or more genuine power.

Hastings Street is an agreeable but very inferior coupling. Perhaps it has been a little overpublicized by such plugs as it got in Jazzmen, which unaccountably refers to a "rhythmic background played by xylophones, rattles, and a whole battery of tomtoms." You'll listen in vain for all that. What you will hear is a guitar-piano duet, with talking by Blind Blake; strongly rhythmic and engaging in spirit, but much less interesting musically than the good boogie-woogie piano records. The main value of Hastings Street, in fact, comes more from Blake's splendid blues guitar playing than from Charlie Spand's piano. Spand is little more than a mediocre pianist -- compare his recent Okeh race offerings. The dubbing of this side is excellent.

DECCA REISSUES

MEADE "LUX" LEWIS De 18110
Piano solo
HONKY TONK TRAIN BLUES

This is the version of Honky Tonk Train which was recorded for English Parlophone shortly after Meade Lux had been rescued from obscurity by John Hammond. Never before available on a domestic label, it is now issued on a fifty-cent Decca pressing as part of the first "Gems of Jazz" album (see below).

Made a decade later than the original Paramount Honky Tonk, the Decca-Parlophone recording has much of the power and flavor of that performance, as well as much of the added lustre of the third version Meade Lux made a bit later for Victor (now available on Bluebird). The tempo, faster than the old Honky Tonk, is not quite as rapid as the Victor; and there are only nine choruses. In spite of a slightly faltering conclusion, this superb Honky Tonk is a little more sure, as well as better recorded, than the Victor. But those who fully appreciate the genius of this greatest of piano solos will certainly want all the available versions. Each of the four shows this facet of Lewis' work in a different light.

"GEMS OF JAZZ" Vols. I, II, III
Decca Albums 200, 201, 242

Decca has released, for the first time in this country, eighteen special hot records which had been available only on foreign labels. Most of them were recorded in the mid-thirties for English Parlophone's "Super Rhythm Style" series, under the supervision of John Hammond. Decca's failure to credit Hammond, now a Columbia executive, for his part in these recordings is hardly commendable.

For commercial purposes, these releases have been packaged in three albums, tagged "Gems of Jazz", and provided with descriptive leaflets by Leonard Feather. Since this grouping is quite arbitrary and the records have little in common, they will be reviewed individually.

A number of the Decca reissues are pressed from different masters, not previously used. Since Decca does not specify which second masters were used,and I don't own all the original records, I may have failed to note some of these.

* * *

JESS STACY

THE WORLD IS WAITING FOR THE SUNRISE De 18110

BARRELHOUSE De 18119

Jess Stacy, piano; Israel Crosby, bass; Gene Krupa, drums.

JESS STACY

De 18119
Piano solo

1. IN THE DARK 2. FLASHES

Jess Stacy's first piano solos were these three sides made for English Parlophone in 1936, two of them with bass and drum accompaniment. *World Is Waiting* is coupled, on this reissue, with the Meade "Lux" Lewis *Honky Tonk* reviewed above.

Barrelhouse is rather a famous record, and not undeservedly. It's an excellent example of Stacy's fascinating piano style: the left hand not prominent here, since Crosby's fine bass and Krupa's precise rhythm keep the rhythm going; the right hand, as always,hard-hitting and full, at once strong and delicately imaginative. Perhaps Stacy's great popularity may be due to the skill and taste with which he builds a complex and sophisticated structure out of the raw materials of authentic jazz piano -- the Armstrong influence as digested by Hines, the fuller and more even sound of the James P. Johnson school, the rags and blues of countless unsung riverboat and honky tonk piano players. Always a sensitive and sincere artist, Stacy manages to avoid two pitfalls: the fancy sterility of a Teddy Wilson, the empty vitality of most of Fats Waller's work.

The World Is Waiting is a second master,very different from the familiar Parlophone version. Similar in style and performance to *Barrelhouse*, it offers even more complex improvisations and difficult rhythms, with a few more weak spots too.

In The Dark and *Flashes*, recorded consecutively on one ten-inch side, are two short compositions by Bix Beiderbecke, played without improvisation as piano solos.The performances are expert and faithful, the pieces themselves pretty and, to my mind, rather trivial. Like the famous *In A Mist*, they're not jazz piano at all, but inspired by the harmonic ideas of modern classical composers. Deprived of the rhythmic and improvisational characteristics which make jazz what is, piano music must be better than this to be good.

MILDRED BAILEY

De 18108, 18109
and her Alley Cats

HONEYSUCKLE ROSE
WILLOW TREE

SQUEEZE ME
DOWNHEARTED BLUES

Mildred Bailey, vocal; accompanied by Bunny Berigan, trumpet; Johnny Hodges, alto sax; Teddy Wilson, piano; Grachan Moncur, bass.

These four sides are a little better than anything Mildred Bailey ever recorded for American consumption. Her attractive style, which augments an exceptionally clear and sweet voice with always charming phrasing and delicate, tasteful changes on the melody, is applied to four standards with great success; and the accompaniment, by a quartet of first-rate musicians, is relaxed and appropriate. Berigan was at his best when these records were made, and his solo and obbligato playing is full, competent and interesting. Hodges backs him with light touches of the biggest, most beautiful alto tone ever produced; Wilson plays more incisively and economically than is his practice today, and Moncur, an underrated bass player, shows fine tone and considerable sensitiveness. Berigan and Hodges improvise separate voices or inoffensive riffs behind Mildred,while Wilson and Moncur maintain a light, engaging swing. *Downhearted Blues* and *Squeeze Me* are particularly fine; and the former, incidentally, far surpasses Mildred's later version on Vocalion.

GENE KRUPA

De 18114, 18115
and his Chicagoans

BLUES OF ISRAEL
THREE LITTLE WORDS

THE LAST ROUND-UP
JAZZ ME BLUES

Nate Kazebier, trumpet; Joe Harris,trombone; Benny Goodman, clarinet; Dick Clark, tenor sax; Jess Stacy, piano; Allen Reuss, guitar; Israel Crosby, bass; Gene Krupa, drums.

This session featured bass player Israel Crosby, then a sensational kid with Fletcher Henderson's orchestra; the rest of the line-up was taken from Goodman's 1936 band. One good side was produced, the famous Blues of Israel. The others are poor. Of chief interest on the four sides is the superb rhythm work of Stacy, Crosby and Krupa; Nate Kazebier's trumpet, reminiscent not only of Berigan but sometimes (like Bunny himself) of Muggsy, shows up to good advantage.

Blues of Israel is slow and quiet, gaining in delicacy what it lacks in spontaneity: a first-rate example of blues as they are played today. The bass takes a four-bar unaccompanied introduction, followed by a strong trumpet chorus. Stacy's chorus, restrained, full and imaginative over a rolling blues figure, is one of the best he ever recorded, and certainly the high spot of the side. Two choruses by Joe Harris' trombone, backed by ensemble riffs and a powerful piano tremolo, are a little boring. The last solo, by Crosby's majestic bass, is called "unaccompanied" by Mr. Feather, who seems to have missed the superb Krupa drumming which increases its effectiveness so much.

The three remaining sides are fairly free performances in fast tempo, all of them mediocre. Three Little Words does contain a good brisk Stacy solo, however, and some fine work by Crosby and Krupa in support of Goodman's two exceptionally dull clarinet choruses. The Last Round-Up is turned out with a good swing, but rather confused ensembles. Kazebier plays extremely well in solo and ensemble, hitting his top notes hard and hot, and staying in a sensible range. As for Jazz Me Blues, best of the three sides, Kazebier and Krupa give it something of a Dixieland air. Harris slides the first solo nicely, but his vague ensemble playing is responsible largely for the weakness of the all-in choruses. Goodman's solo chorus is fine, a pleasing contrast to his meaningless noodling on Words. Notice the pounding background the rhythm section provides for this and Kazebier's equally effective chorus. What spoils the side is the self-conscious and wholly sloppy use of the crescendo-ensemble effect associated with the Tesch-Chicago recordings.

JOE MARSALA De 18111
and his Delta Six

FEATHER BED LAMENT
TWELVE BAR STAMPEDE

PETE BROWN De 18118
and his Jump Band

OCEAN MOTION
TEMPO DI JUMP

Benny Carter, trumpet and alto sax; Joe Marsala, clarinet; Pete Brown, trumpet and alto sax; Billy Kyle, piano; Bobby Hackett, guitar and cornet; Hayes Alvis, bass; Cozy Cole, drums.

These four sides were made at a New York session supervised by Leonard Feather, who also takes credit as composer of the tunes. Whether they were previously issued on foreign labels I don't know.

As you can see from the line-up, it's a curiously mixed trick band. As you might guess, the music is tricky Harlem riff stuff -- certainly the poorest in these albums. There are interesting passages by Carter on alto and trumpet, one Hackett cornet solo of minor dimensions, some typical Marsala clarinet and best of all, Pete Brown's vigorous and witty alto. If you want to sample these, they the first coupling: both sides are blues. The melodic material of the other two sides is highly unsuitable.

BUD FREEMAN De 18112, 18113
and his Windy City Five

THE BUZZARD
TILLIE'S DOWNTOWN NOW

WHAT IS THERE TO SAY?
KEEP SMILING AT TROUBLE

Bunny Berigan, trumpet; Bud Freeman, tenor and clarinet; Claude Thornhill, piano; Eddie Condon, guitar; Grachan Moncur, bass; Cozy Cole, drums.

Another of the 1936 Parlophone sessions. This one featured Bud Freeman on tenor sax and his rarely heard clarinet, with Berigan on trumpet and a strong rhythm section. Hardly "Chicagoan", the sides feature light, spontaneous jamming with Bud's style (on tenor especially) at its crankiest and Berigan playing typical powerhouse horn.

The Buzzard introduces Bud on clarinet, which he plays competently in low register, with good phrasing and tone. After some rather frilly Berigan Bud returns on tenor, honking an Eel-like solo. Thornhill's chorus is in good style but weak and the closing jam duet, like most on these sides, has some very disunified moments.

Tillie's Downtown Now, a slowish blues, is pressed from an entirely different and, in my opinion, much more interesting master than the Parlophone. Bud's opening low-register clarinet is really excellent, and bears out the fellow-musicians who say he'd do better on clarinet than on tenor if he'd stick to it. Berigan's long solo begins with a blues figure from way back, nicely played, which doesn't appear on the other master. A melodic but sour-toned tenor interlude leads to the ensemble close.

Keep Smiling At Trouble, a favorite tune of Bud's, comes through well on his tenor; this is perhaps his best solo on the four sides. As for Berigan, one begins to wonder exactly what he's doing. He plays with power, a fine tone, and occasional good ideas; but his taste seems uneven and real drive. He doesn't fit with Bud, even at the latter's fanciest.

Fine rhythm, and Berigan in somewhat better manner, feature What Is There To Say, another favorite pop tune. Bud's tenor solo is good, but Berigan's trumpet goes wild. The finale of this side is played by trumpet and clarinet with little credit to either; Bud switches to tenor at the last minute.

BUNNY BERIGAN De 18116, 18117
and his Blue Boys

I'M COMING VIRGINIA
BLUES

CHICKEN AND WAFFLES
YOU TOOK ADVANTAGE OF ME

Bunny Berigan, trumpet; Edgar Sampson, clarinet and alto; Eddie Miller, clarinet and tenor; Cliff Jackson, piano; Grachan Moncur, bass; Ray Bauduc, drums.

Featured on two of the Parlophone "Super Rhythm Style" sessions, Berigan also had a date of his own, for which a rather unusual band was assembled. There's a very good rhythm section, with Bauduc drumming solidly and unobtrusively behind Jackson's full, unpretentious piano. But except for the Blues, all the sides are mediocre.

Berigan may be one of the best of the new crop of white trumpeters; but he is hardly at his best in small-band work. Hiw slow, broad solo on the Blues is impressive, and the muted chorus in Advantage even better; on the other hand his solo and especially his ensemble playing tend to be excessively florid and unclear. The worst example is the end of Advantage.

Session stars are Bauduc, Jackson and Miller, who plays his pleasant Dixielandish clarinet and some unusually Freemanish tenor. Edgar Sampson's alto, rather out of style for the band, is much better than his clarinet, which squeaks through the Chicken only.

JOE VENUTI De 18167, 18168
and his Blue Six

SWEET LORRAINE
DOIN' THE UPTOWN LOWDOWN

JAZZ ME BLUES
IN DE RUFF

Joe Venuti, violin; Benny Goodman, clarinet; Bud Freeman, tenor sax; Adrian Rollini, bass sax; Joe Sullivan, piano; Dick McDonough, guitar; Neil Marshall, drums.

Originally issued only on English Columbia, these light sides feature some excellent playing by Benny Goodman and especially Bud Freeman, whose powerful tenor lends drive and color to the feeble Venuti-led ensembles. Sullivan has only a few solo spots.

Uptown Lowdown and Jazz Me Blues are the better sides. In De Ruff is a straight steal of Dipper Mouth, which begins well but trails off into inconsequentialities.

"BUCK" WASHINGTON De 18169
Piano solo

OLD FASHIONED LOVE

Buck Washington's only recorded piano solo is this rather well known Old Fashioned Love, originally issued on American Columbia with Joe Sullivan's Onyx Bringdown. Buck's long membership of the vaude team of Buck and Bubbles has partly obscured a considerable talent for jazz piano. The solo has sloppy parts, but also a powerful, chopped style somewhat similar to Hines', and an excellent sense of form and contrast.

FLETCHER HENDERSON De 18169
and his Orchestra

QUEER NOTIONS

Coupled with the Washington solo is this Coleman Hawkins composition, not the old Vocalion version but one made specially for English Columbia. Built out of simple dissonant chords which recall Chant of the Weeds, the side features Hawkins at length, as well Henry Allen in some very weird playing.

SPIKE HUGHES De 18170
and his Orchestra

NOCTURNE
ARABESQUE

Personnel for first side only: Shad Collins, Leonard Davis, Bill Dillard, trumpets; Dickie Wells, Wilbur de Paris, George Washington, trombones; Benny Carter, Howard Johnson, Coleman Hawkins, reeds; Rodriguez, piano; Lawrence Lucie, guitar; Ernest Hill, bass; Kaiser Marshall, drums. For second side Henry Allen replaced Shad Collins; Wayman Carver and Chu Berry were added to the reeds, Sidney Catlett played drums, and there was no piano.

These sides, originally issued on English Decca, were recorded in the U.S. by Benny Carter's 1933 orchestra under the leadership of the English bass player and swing fan Spike Hughes. Both sides are heavily arranged, competently played big-band music typical of the period. Arabesque features a long solo by Dickie Wells which has many good points although the accompaniment hinders it considerably.

HORACE HENDERSON De 18171, 18172
and his Orchestra

MINNIE THE MOOCHER'S WEDDIN' DAY
I'M RHYTHM CRAZY NOW

OL' MAN RIVER
HAPPY FEET

Russell Smith, Bobby Stark, Henry Allen, trumpets; Claude Jones, Dickie Wells, trombones; Hilton Jefferson, Russell Procope, Coleman Hawkins, saxes; Horace Henderson, piano (except in Rhythm Crazy, Fletcher Henderson); Bernard Addison, guitar; John Kirby, bass; Walter Johnson, drums.

These sides were made about 1933 or '34 by Fletcher Henderson's orchestra (the same which made Queer Notions — see above), and issued under Horace's name on English Parlophone.

They're among the best recorded examples of Henderson's later style: powerful large-band performances with lifting rhythm, driving ensemble riffs and plenty of solos. The individual spotlight goes most frequently to Allen, Hawkins and Wells. The better sides are Happy Feet and Rhythm Crazy, the latter previously available on a U.H.C.A. reissue.

MEADE "LUX" LEWIS De 3831
Piano and celeste solos

MR. FREDDIE BLUES
CELESTE BLUES

Included in Decca's second "Boogie Woogie" album, among a lot of rather unimpressive stuff, is this first American pressing of Mr. Freddie Blues. Meade Lux recorded this fine piano solo several years ago, but it was issued on foreign Brunswick only.

Mr. Freddie is a famous but infrequently recorded blues from way back, composed and first waxed by Harry Shayne. Lewis' version is characteristic, in brisk tempo with a jumpy boogie bass and a restrained right hand which rumbles the tune without hitting the upper octaves at all.

Celeste Blues is too well known to need much comment. It has always been available on Decca, and this new issue merely changes the coupling. The most successful b.w. exposition on celeste, it uses the bell sonority of the instrument to produce a novel and delightful effect from familiar means.

DOT RICE & FRANKIE BLACK De 3834
Piano and Guitar

TEXAS STOMP

Another record in Decca's new B.W. album brings Texas Stomp (first mentioned in print, I believe, in J.I.'s Collectors Item column) out of the comparatively inaccessible race list into the standard catalog.

A piano-guitar duet (Dot Rice plays the piano), it's very reminiscent of Hastings Street except that there's no talking. While it hasn't all the impetus of the famous Blake-Spand Paramount, it has the same charming, buoyant rhythm; and in some parts is more exciting. A genuine blues item, this side belongs in any blues piano collection. The coupling, oddly enough, is the Bob Crosby version of Yancey Special.

TURNER PARRISH De 3835
Piano solo

TRENCHES

Turner Parrish is (or was) a completely obscure blues artist who made some accompaniments and piano solos long ago for the cheap Champion label (which belonged first to Gennett, then to Decca). The two solos were Trenches and Fives, the latter the same piece as Jimmy Yancey's Fives, recently recorded for Solo Art.

The solos showed a genuine blues pianist of perhaps the second or third rank: sloppy and probably imitative, with a tendency to rush the tempo and weak rhythmic separation of his right and left hands. Nevertheless, Parrish was an interesting player and recorded otherwise unwaxed tunes. His Champion record is a fairly common and popular item among blues piano collectors.

Now the Trenches appear on a Decca reissue, which I recommend. Just why the better Fives is omitted is a question which Decca pundits probably can't answer. To make room in the B.W. album for Kenny Kersey, Zurke or Linehan?

J.I. & U.H.C.A. REISSUES

I did not review the Jazz Information Limited Edition reissues as they appeared, partly because full (and, to my mind, accurate) descriptions appeared in this magazine, and partly because my own interest in J.I. might seem to make me a prejudiced observer. But I can't let my last column end without mentioning what seems to me one of the most important groups of reissues ever released - certainly the only reissues chosen for their merit alone, with the certainty that they would eventually sell enough copies to pay for themselves.

The most important event in jazz during the past few years, I think, has been the steadily increasing taste for good hot music. This is what made J.I.'s editorial policy, and later its reissue program, possible. Reissues were both a contributing cause of this interest, and one of its most important effects. Vitally important, because without the old records the jazz tradition would continue to disappear.

When (and, of course, if) the Columbia, Bluebird and Decca reissue programs are completed, a majority of the important jazz records will be available to everyone at 35 or 50 cents each. This remarkable achievement, with all it can mean in a wider appreciation of genuine jazz music, could never have happened without the groundwork laid by Commodore and, later, H.R.S.

But there is still one group of records which can not as yet appeal to a large enough public to interest the big companies. Because of this limited appeal, and the difficulty of finding new copies to dub from, they had also been neglected by U.H.C.A. and H.R.S. It was this batch of unappreciated great records — specifically, the Paramounts and Gennetts — from which the J.I. reissues were chosen.

Two considerations were foremost in the selection: musical quality, and rarity. Quality was assessed from the standpoint of the New Orleans and blues traditions; and the sides chosen were very satisfactorily dubbed. The result was ten reissues every one of which belongs in a jazz record collection.

It's hard to say which are the most important — the fine Freddie Keppard reissue, which rescued a very significant jazz record from complete obscurity, the great Gennett Olivers, better known but also hard to obtain, the two fine boogie-woogie piano solos, the Ollie Powers with its overwhelming Ladnier solo, the vocal blues records with their superb Armstrong cornet accompaniments.

Because the magazine's initiative and its contact with collectors made these reissues possible, they were released first in Limited Editions for subscribers only. But all (except No. 3) will be permanently available to the public on U.H.C.A. reissues, too. I recommend them as highly as Columbia's best: that is, without reservation.

COLLECTORS' ITEMS

PICOU'S OLIVER DATE: THE LAST WORD

There is nothing to the story that Alphonse Picou recorded with King Oliver. The veteran New Orleans clarinetist's first and only recording date was the Delta session last year with Kid Rena's Jazz Band.

This final report comes from New Orleans collector Orin Blackstone, who was kind enough to investigate the tale at our request. It was reported last year in the *HRS Rag* that Picou "avers that he played on several King Oliver Okehs. He was unable to remember titles, but thought that *Snake Rag* was among them."

The *Rag* commented that the Okeh *Snake Rag* is an undoubted *Johnny Dodds side*, and left the affair at that. Since then collectors have made various guesses as to which Oliver date Picou played on. Partly to establish the personnel of the Gennett *Snake Rag* before reissuing it as *Limited Edition Number 5*, and partly to settle the Picou story once and for all, we asked Blackstone to check up at the source, Picou himself.

After two visits to Picou, Orin wrote that "Picou was recorded all right, by King Oliver on the Okeh label. But it wasn't Picou playing clarinet; it was Picou as composer. King Oliver simply recorded Picou's tunes, *Snake Rag* and a couple of others whose titles were changed. They were listed as *Olympia Rag* and *Onzaga Blues*, in a letter from Oliver which Picou dug up to show me."

The names under which Picou's tunes were released are not known. Oliver's Columbia record of *New Orleans Stomp* and *Chattanooga Stomp* credits Picou as co-composer on both sides. So does the Gennett *Alligator Hop*.

JIMMIE NOONE'S OLIVER RECORDS

Jimmie Noone played clarinet on one of the recording dates of King Oliver's Jazz Band. He renembers the occasion fairly clearly: Oliver was angry with Johnny Dodds for some reason, and called in Noone for the record session.

Wes Neff, who relayed this information from Chicago, couldn't pin Jimmie down to any specific company or titles. Likeliest chance is that Noone is on the Columbia Olivers, since all the Okehs, Paramounts and all but two of the Gennetts are certainly Johnny Dodds.

The two Gennetts on which Johnny Dodds didn't play are *Krooked Blues* and *Alligator Hop*, recorded months after the first Gennett date. The band on this date has never been identified. *Hot Discography* incorrectly lists *Sidney Bechet* on clarinet; but it wasn't Bechet or Dodds or Noone. Some collectors thought that Buster Bailey, who was in the band for a short time around 1923-24, might have made this date. But Buster recently told Herman Rosenberg he didn't make any Gennetts with Oliver.

Which leaves it up in the air. If the clarinet isn't Albert Nicholas, and it doesn't sound like him, it may well be some unknown. The alto saxophonist, incidentally, is probably not Stomp Evans but Rudy Jackson, a regular member of the band at that time.

THE KEPPARD "SALTY DOG" PERSONNEL

Personnel of the *Salty Dog* and *Stock Yards Strut* (Paramount 12-399), by Freddie Keppard's Jazz Cardinals, was never known until the two sides were chosen for reissue as J.I. Limited Edition Number Four. We asked our Chicago correspondent, Wes Neff, to try to dig up the line-up. He went to Jasper Taylor, oldtime drum and washboard recording artist, and played a copy of the record for him. Taylor then gave the personnel as it appears on the reissue label: Freddie Keppard, trumpet (or cornet); Eddie Vincent, trombone; Jimmy O'Bryant, clarinet; Arthur Campbell, piano; and Taylor himself, wood blocks. He wasn't sure about the trombone - it might have been Vincent (also known as Venson) or possibly Honore Dutrey or the clarinet, which might have been played by Johnny Dodds instead of O'Bryant.

The clarinet on the Keppard is surprisingly good for O'Bryant, who is best known for his rather mediocre work on various Lovie Austin accompaniments and for some emphatically corny playing on other records. On the other hand, the tone is thinner than Dodds' in spots and the phrasing less agile. Since O'Bryant, on many records when he wasn't trying to be corny, was an effective Dodds imitator, and also because Jasper Taylor was fairly sure of his memory, we used O'Bryant's name on the label. This personnel will stand until further evidence is obtained.

Incidentally, some collectors will have noticed a gap between the master numbers of the two Keppard sides. We asked Charles Rogers of Trenton, N. J., who has made a study of Paramount master numbers, for some light on this subject. His reply indicated that two master numbers 2652 and 2654, adjacent to the Salty Dog and Stock Yards Strut numbers, are vacant. That is, no record has been found bearing these numbers; although the numbers preceding 2651 and following 2654 are found on known records.

This seems to prove that two other sides were made by "Whalemouth" Keppard and the boys. Perhaps they were never released; but it may be that they were issued under Papa Charlie Jackson's name and have escaped collectors' attention.

A PSEUDONYMIC LUIS RUSSELL DISC

William Kaestner of Milwaukee reports through John Steiner that the 1929 recording of Shout, Sister Shout and If I Could Be With You, Columbia 2243, was made by the Luis Russell band.

The record, released under the name of "Lazy Levee Loungers", was identified through inquiries among the Red Allen band.

Personnel on the session was: Red Allen, trumpet; J. C. Higginbotham, trombone; Al Nicholas, Charlie Holmes, Teddy Hill, saxes; Luis Russell, piano; Bill Johnson, banjo; Pop Foster, bass; Paul Barbarin, drums; and Andy Razaf, vocals.

This information answers the question by John Reid published in our column for January 12, 1940.

THE NEW ORLEANS STOMP PROBLEM

Charles Rogers of Trenton, N.J., tells us he caught Earl Hines' band in New York last May, and had the chance to ask Hines about the very rare and frequently disputed Vocalion 15632 Weary Blues - New Orleans Stomp by Johnny Dodds' Black Bottom Stompers.

"I wanted to get the information from him, direct, as to who the trumpet was, so I only mentioned a few names on the date: Stomp Evans, Baby Dodds, and Earl Hines. Earl remembered the whole date very well, because they all went over to Johnny Dodds' house to rehearse. He started enumerating the rest of the personnel, Johnny St. Cyr, Dutrey (I think), etc. I interposed that the trumpet was the only doubtful man, and that William Russell and others now believed the horn to be Punch Miller. 'No, that was Louie,' Earl said. So there you have it. Because of the licks constructed out of themes taken from Rigoletto, I believed it to be Armstrong all along, but when the critical nays came pouring in, I began to be doubtful of my own ear. It is now vindicated."

According to Mr. Rogers Hines also remembered the Wild Man and

Weary Blues sides. We publish this information for what it is worth; but must add the caution that the four or five most expert Armstrong specialists still don't believe Louis played on the record in question. The reason -- it doesn't sound like Louis, to them.

ONE MORE RAINEY TRUMPETER

In the May-June, 1941, issue of Jazz News, official organ of the Hot Club of Zurich, Switzerland, editor Jonny Simmen writes a report on Willie Lewis' band, recently arrived there from Holland.

Writing of second trumpet Henry Mason, Simmen reports that "this musician recorded several blues interpretations about 1928-29 with the late singer Ma Rainey. Mason does not, however, recall the titles of any of the pieces."

This information brings to three the number of trumpeters who have recorded with Ma Rainey on so-far unidentified discs. George Mitchell made several sides with Ma along with Jimmy O'Bryant; Shirley Clay also says he recorded with Rainey. Neither, however, can remember titles.

NEW WHOOPEE MAKERS- IT'S GOOD!

A card from George Avakian postmarked May 7 reports the discovery of an unlisted and good "Whoopee Makers" item: Farewell Blues by Mills' Merry Makers on Velvetone 7121 (master 149955) -- a third side from the St. James and Smilin' date listed on page 219 of Hot Discography. There's a batch of solos: Goodman, Teagarden, McPartland and probably Larry Binyon on tenor.

SIX MORE SIDES FOR BECHET LIST

Albert J. McCarthy of Shirley, Southampton, England, writes of six sides which ought to be added to JAZZ INFORMATION's Bechet discography.

They were made in London, around 1920, under the name of the Southern Rag-A-Jazz Band, the orchestra being actually Will Marion Cook's. Bechet, according to Mr. McCarthy, can be heard quite distinctly on soprano in these records, which are:

Do You Ever Think Of Me? (6984) -- My Mammy (6985), Winner 3592.
Riger Rag (6986) -- When My Baby Smiles At Me (7002), Winner 3607
Coal Black Mammy (7003) -- Crooning (7004), Winner 3625.

Hilton Schleman's "Rhythm On Record" listed these records without personnel, stating merely that "Soon after their arrival (in London) the band split up. The colored group went to Paris and then returned to America. In the meantime the Southern Rag-A-Jazz Band was re-organized in London and augmented by a number of British musicians."

Presumably the Winner records were made by the re-organized band. Bechet remained in London until the fall of 1920, so it's possible he did play on these records. This item is published for further investigation.

MUGGSY AND TESCH DID NOT PLAY ON PIERCE'S "JAZZ ME", "SISTER KATE"!

Charles Pierce's Jazz Me Blues and Sister Kate, rare Paramount record which had been generally accepted as featuring Muggsy Spanier's cornet and Frank Teschemacher's clarinet, was discredited last month in a startling discovery by George Avakian. Both sides were reissued this Spring as Muggsy-Tesch items, Sister Kate by both U. H. C. A. and Columbia, the other side by U. H. C. A. only.

Avakian's scoop revealed for the first time that Charlie Altiere and Morry Bercov, respectively, played cornet and clarinet on the above-named sides, while Muggsy and Tesch were present only on Pierce's first two sides (Bull Frog Blues and China Boy) and his fifth (Nobody's Sweetheart).

In the course of a rare-record hunt in Chicago, Charlie Altiere, a rather obscure cornetist, was asked if he had any of the Pierce Paramounts. He said he had only the one record he played on. Later the same day, Avakian learned from Ralph Rudder, Chicago dentist who played tenor on all the Pierces, that Altiere and Bercov played the two sides in question.

Bercov, it seems, is the same Tesch-like clarinetist who played on the Danny Altier Vocalion with Muggsy, Stacy and Wettling (see J.I. for January 24, 1941). Cornetist Altiere is a distant cousin of alto saxist Danny Altier; hence the different spelling.

The above information also appeared in George Hoefer's column in Down Beat for August 1. According to Avakian, Hoefer collared bass player Jim Lanigan for further information on the Pierces, only to learn that Lanigan doesn't remember the records and doubted he was on them. Against this, we can set a letter received by JAZZ INFORMATION several months ago from Mrs. Bud Jacobson, wife of the Chicago clarinet player. Mrs. Jacobson wrote to correct the U.H.C.A. personnel of the Pierce band as given on page 19 of the February 21 issue of J. I., as follows:

"I am in close contact with the boys on the above record, and spoke to Ray Siegel, the bass player you credit. Had he played on this record, he would have been ten years old. You can accept this as authentic: that Jim Lanigan (Jimmy MacPartland's brother-in-law, now with the Chicago symphony) played bass on the above record." Mrs. Jacobson also made two spelling corrections in the same line-up: the drummer was Paul Kettler, not Keppler; and the pianist is Danny Lipscomb, not Ray Litscombe.

(Later: George Hoefer reported, in his Down Beat column, that the bass player was neither Siegel nor Lanigan, but Johnny Mueller.)

Since all of the Pierce records were omitted inadvertently from the Commodore edition of Hot Discography, we print below an up-to-date Pierce discography, which can be pasted on page 166 of either the 1938 or 1940 editions.

●

CHARLES PIERCE AND HIS ORCHESTRA

Muggsy Spanier (cornet); Frank Teschemacher (clarinet and 1st sax); Ralph Rudder (2nd sax, tenor); Charles Pierce (3rd sax); Danny Lipscomb (piano); Stuart Branch (guitar); Johnny Mueller (bass); Paul Kettler (drums). Recorded in Chicago, 1927.

BULL FROG BLUES (20399)	Para 12619, UHCA 1-2
CHINA BOY (20400)	Para 12619, UHCA 1-2

Probably the same personnel, with Jack Read (trombone) added. Recorded November 8, 1927.

NOBODY'S SWEETHEART (20534)	Para 12616, Bway 1174, Co 35950

Personnel same as above, without trombone, except that Charlie Altiere (cornet) replaced Spanier and Morry Bercov (clarinet) replaced Teschemacher. Recorded October 29, 1927.

JAZZ ME BLUES (20469)	Para 12640, BrE 02502, UHCA 71-72
SISTER KATE (20470)	Para 12640, UHCA 71-72, Co 35950

●

RAINEY'S "JEALOUS HEARTED BLUES"

The excellent cornetist on Ma Rainey's Jealous Hearted Blues (soon to be released on a J.I. reissue) is Howard R. "Scotty" Scott.

The reissue label lists only Buster Bailey, clarinet, and Charlie Green, trombone. The personnel of Jealous Hearted had not been known, except that (of course) unlike its coupling See See Rider, it does not feature Louis Armstrong.

The new information, which came too late to make a label change, was uncovered when Milt Gabler played See See Rider and Jealous Hearted for Buster Bailey. Bailey identified the Jealous Hearted horn quite positively as Scotty, but also stated definitely that he did not play clarinet on that side. It might be Don Redman, he suggested.

The See See Rider personnel (Armstrong, Bailey and Green) as given on the J.I. label is correct.

FROM THE HOT BOX

It has been our practice to reprint (with due credit) any important personnel information that appeared in other magazines, to save our readers the necessity of wading through (for instance) Down Beat. Here, then, is a brief summary of items published in George Hoefer's "Hot Box" since our last issue.

Jasper Taylor's State Street Boys, Paramount 12409, It Must Be The Blues (2771) — Stomp Time Blues (2770), features Natty Dominique, trumpet; Johnny Dodds, clarinet; Tiny Parham, piano; Jasper Taylor, washboard; probably Honore Dutrey, trombone. Information from Dominique.

Dewey Jackson's Peacock Orchestra, Vocalion 1039, Goin' To Town — What Do You Want; Vocalion 1040, Capitol Blues — She's Crying For Me. Dewey Jackson, Albert Snaer, trumpets; W. Luper, trombone; Willie Humphrey, tenor sax; Thornton Blue, clarinet and alto; Cliff Cochrane, alto; Floyd Campbell, drums; Burroughs Lovingood, piano; Pete Robinson, banjo; Pop Foster, string bass; Cecil White, tuba. This band played on the riverboat Capitol in 1925; the records were made in St. Louis. Information was from Floyd Campbell.

Bubber Miley's Mileage Makers, Victors V38146 and V38138: Miley, trumpet; Charlie Irvis, trombone; Hilton Jefferson, alto; Earl Fraser, piano; Bernard Addison, guitar; unknown tenor, bass and drums. Victor 22568 was made by a different combination. Information from Hilton Jefferson.

THE GONSOULIN STORY

Bertha GonSouLin, a piano teacher in San Francisco, says she was the pianist on King Oliver's Gennett Chimes Blues, Froggie Moore, etc.

Hurry! HURRY! HURRY !!

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COLLECTORS ITEMS ON PARAMOUNT and other makes for sale. Write for list to Blue Note Records, 10 West 47th Street, New York City.

WANTED: PIERCE NOBODY'S SWEETHEART Paramount (new); will trade my new Bull Frog Blues. Also wanted: Armstrong Drop That Sack (master not reissued on for'n Bruns.); Noone's Every Evening (master not used for Melotone release). Box 331 c/o J.I. Box 6, Station H, New York City.

COLLECTORS! Get my catalogs. #10 coming out. "Hot" discs, mostly cutouts, 10¢ up. 3¢ stamp with request please. H. Mereness, 1011 Jackson Boulevard, Houston, Texas.

This story, which has reached us through several sources during the past year, has not been confirmed; but we pass it on for investigation.

Bertha GonSouLin says she joined the Oliver band in San Francisco, went back to Chicago with them and played there for a while. As proof, she runs over the piano parts of *Chimes* and *Froggie*, and gives circumstantial details of the band and its Chicago run.

The consensus of surviving Oliver musicians has been that Lil played piano on all the Oliver records; but the GonSouLin story may well be true all the same. Try to remember what *you* did in 1923.

SAM WOODING AND HIS ORCHESTRA

Alfred Lion and Frank Wolf of New York City, whose collection includes a number of rare foreign records, brought this to our attention some time ago.

Samuel Wooding, who now conducts a choral group named the "Wooding Southland Singers", and was one of the first jazz band leaders to tour the Continent, made some records while abroad. These seem to have escaped the attention of discographers.

After hearing the records, we wrote to Mr. Wooding, who lives in Philadelphia. He replied, in part:

"We had been playing for a year at the Club Alabam, which was located under the Nora Bayes Theatre ...when we obtained our European contract. Our opening in Berlin was such a success we were sought after immediately for records and radio concerts."

The band's first records were made in Berlin, about 1924, for the German "Vox" label. Two of these (perhaps the only ones made) are in the possession of Lion and Wolf. They are: *Alabamy Bound — By The Waters Of Minnetonka Melody*, Vox 1891; and *Shanghai Shuffle — O Katharina!*, Vox 1883. According to Mr. Wooding, the personnel was: Bobby Martin, Maceo Edwards, Tommy Ladnier, trumpets; Herbert Fleming, trombone; Garvin Bushell, clarinet oboe and sax; Willie Lewis, second alto; Eugene Sedric, tenor sax; Samuel Wooding, piano and arranger; John Mitchell, tenor banjo; John Warren, bass; George Howe, drums.

Mr. Wooding adds that it was he who "brought Tommy Ladnier from Chicago and introduced him into big time salary of $100.00 and $150.00 a week. It was after he had made a European trip with me that Tommy had enough prestige to receive offers from such leaders as Fletcher Henderson and Noble Sissle." Ladnier played hot solos on the Wooding records of *Shanghai* and *Alabamy*.

Another Wooding disc is French Pathe X-8684, *Downcast Blues — Weary River*. For these sides Jerry Blake replaced Bushell as first alto, Freddie Johnson was pianist and "Doc" Cheatham played first trumpet. Both the Pathe and the Vox records were under the name of "Sam Wooding and his Orchestra".

Later, the band recorded for Spanish Parlophone, in Barcelona, under the name of "Maestro Sam Wooding y sus Chocolate Dandies". Of these, Lion and Wolf have the following: *Bull Foot Stomp — Indian Love*, Parlophone 25424; *Carrie — Tiger Rag*, Parlophone 25420; and *Sweet Back Blues* (Jacinto Blues) *— My Pal Called Sal*, Parlophone 25421. *Sweet Back*, a composition of Jacinto (Jerry) Blake, featured Bobby Martin on trumpet. Several of the titles were Wooding originals.

Ladnier, apparently, was no longer present. Besides Martin there was still Cheatham, who took most of the trumpet work. Blake and Sedric played the sax and clarinet solos. Ted Fields, who sang *Indian Love*, was the new drummer; and Willie Lewis sang two vocals.

The above information, all we know about these forgotten records, is published more for its historical value than in the interest of collectors who may own these records; undoubtedly they are very rare. Their musical quality is on a par with some of the early Hendersons; the arrangements are simple and adequate, the solos good.

What's New in Jazz

(Continued from Page 9)

sala, who used Marty on trumpet, two saxes, and rhythm with Dave Tough, drums.

Jimmy MacPartland followed Marsala July 7, bringing with him from New York Pee Wee Russell, George Brunies, Joe Sullivan, and Eddie Condon.

The MacPartland group split up after its Brass Rail showing, Sullivan going to Minneapolis for a solo piano job and Pee Wee returning to New York. Mike Riley followed them at the Brass Rail.

NEW SIDNEY BECHET RECORDINGS

Sidney Bechet recorded six sides for Victor in September with Charlie Shavers, trumpet; Willie "The Lion" Smith, piano; Everett Barksdale, guitar; Wellman Braud, bass, and Mainzie Johnson, drums. Titles recorded with the full band were I'm Coming Virginia, Limehouse Blues, Texas Moaner and Georgia Cabin. Two other tunes, Strange Fruit and You're The Limit, were waxed by a trio consisting of Bechet, Smith and Barksdale.

Two of these sides have already been released. Bechet's most recent date was on October 14, with Henry Goodwin, trumpet; Vic Dickenson, trombone; Don Donaldson, piano; Ernest Williamson, bass; and Mainzie Johnson, drums. Titles waxed were Suey, Rip Up The Joint, Blues In The Air, and The Mooche.

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Commodore Music Shop has come into possession of the remaining stock of the Teddy Wilson School for Pianists. The stock includes a number of sets of privately recorded Wilson piano solos (ten sides in all), with transcriptions and analyses.

NEWS IN BRIEF

(Continued from Page 9)

ie's band (now playing at New York's Cafe Society Uptown), for Columbia.

Johnny Simmons, colored bassman with Benny Goodman, was replaced by Marty Blitz. With Sidney Catlett also gone and Charlie Christian still ill, this leaves Cootie Williams (soon to depart) as the only remaining Negro musician with B.G.

June Clark left Otisville Sanitarium in September... Blues singer Monette Moore, another oldtimer, is at the 721 Club...Fate Marable, off the riverboats for good, is reported to have a small combination at a St. Louis spot.

In Chicago, Fletcher Henderson opened at Olson's with Claude Jones and Sandy Williams in his trombone section.

WARD PINKETT...

(Continued from Page 39)

buried in Newport News. He is survived by a 13-year old daughter by his first marriage, Doris Louise Pinkett, who resides with her grandmother in Newport News. She too is musically inclined, and expects to follow in her father's footsteps.

A sister, Loretta, plays sax and directs a swing band in Newport News today.

Besides his records with Jelly Roll Morton, Pinkett is to be heard on Dog Bottom and Jungle Mama, by Chick Webb's Jungle Band, Brunswick 4450. He played solo trumpet and sang the scat chorus on the first side. Ward also plays and sings on King Oliver's Stop Crying and Papa De-Da-Da, Brunswick 6053. He played most of the solo trumpet on Oliver's well-known Call Of The Freaks and Trumpet's Prayer, Victor 38039.

Pinkett also played trumpet on Top And Bottom and Coalyard Shuffle, by Joe Steele's orchestra, and Clarence Williams' Shout Sister Shout, Perfect 15403.

Book Review

"SEND ME DOWN"

To date this is the best fictional approach to the field of jazz. That is not to say that Send Me Down (by Henry Steig; published by Alfred A. Knopf, New York; $2.50) is a "good" novel, in the sense that it is technically perfect, or that it is even a "good" treatment of the background. It is better than Young Man With A Horn and better than Piano In The Band for two excellent reasons: Steig writes better than either Curran or Baker, and he knows much more about the subject.

The story of the careers of two musical brothers from childhood to maturity, Send Me Down touches on almost every phase of the music set-up, from the Royal Gardens to Roseland and from one-nighters in Harrisburg to stage shows in New York. It divides the subject neatly into two parts: commercial music, and art-for-art's sake music. And the solution is a compromise.

Steig writes convincingly and quite authentically of the background of musicians. Almost always his places and events have the right flavor, but occasionally his people get a bit out of character. This is due, in part, to their frequent lapses into stilted speech.

Other faults are to be found in structure. The characters of the two brothers, outlined perfectly at the beginning and end of the book, merge in a curious fashion during most of the middle section. I believe this is due to bad planning on Steig's part, and also to the fact that every time he wants to get his own theories on jazz across (and they're not at all bad), he insists on a dialogue between the two brothers.

It seems almost as if Steig first wrote the expositional paragraphs and then said to himself, "Well, we'll let Pete say these first three sentences and Frank can say the next two;" etc. The result has the brothers distinctly out of character part of the time.

The best thing about the book is its real "feel" for hot music. This is shown in many ways, such as playing Bessie Smith records as accompaniment for a hangover, and the description of the knocked-out clarinet and sax playing of brother Pete in a Harrisburg gin-mill.

It's a pleasure to read Send Me Down after trash like Piano In The Band and sentimental trivia like Young Man With A Horn. But it's unfortunate that it isn't a better job. Steig has been a musician and he gets that Catskills-to-Coney Island feeling down perfectly, but he seems to have picked up all his knowledge of the great Chicago bands second-hand; and therefore talks about them in a fashion that creates the impression that he's not sure of himself. None of the faults in themselves are major ones, but put together they weaken the novel considerably.

— However, by all means read Send Me Down — if only as an antidote for the trash that has been written about jazz.

— RALPH J. GLEASON

LOUIS AND EARL...

(Continued from Page 76)

pening. Undaunted, however, Louis returns to open the fourth chorus with another beautiful solo, joined by the full band for an ensemble conclusion. The honors on this record go to Jelly Roll, and to Louis and Hines in the second chorus especially. If you work fast you can pick up the needle before it gets to that horrible arranged saxophone coda. Louis' last phrase makes a better ending.

The other records in the album are Weather Bird (the Armstrong solo with Hines at the piano — the original coupling, Dear Old Southland, is now in Columbia's "Hot Trumpets" album), A Monday Date, West End Blues and Muggles, by the same band that made Don't Jive Me; and Tight Like This and Heah Me Talkin' To Ya?, by the "Savoy Ballroom Five" (the same combination, with Redman playing alto as well as arranging).

The two best of these are unquestionably Muggles and West End, in which Redman's influence is more tasteful and less conspicuous. Almost a simple 12-bar blues, Muggles opens with a chorus of solo piano, perhaps a little too delicate and fanciful (compare Hines'more downright playing on Chicago Breakdown); then twelve bars each by trombone and clarinet, both playing good blues, accompanied only by four dull beats from the rhythm. After Strong's solo, Louis whips it up masterfully to double time and plays two-thirds of a chorus rather nervously with organ chords by the band behind him. For the last four bars of this (fourth) chorus, Louis drops to the old tempo and plays a compelling blues phrase; then he takes the last chorus solo, still against organ chords with Hines rippling in the background: a fantastically hot and immensely moving solo, traditional in its melodic content and played with simple, heartfelt and plaintive intonations.

Louis' famous West End Blues is a far cry from the Oliver tune which the King himself played; and less direct blues than Muggles. It begins with Louis' breathless, exciting solo introduction; then drops to a medium tempo for a chorus of solo trumpet against simply arranged chords. Fred Robinson's wailing trombone chorus is excellent, backed by Zutty's original drumming (damped small cymbals?): then Strong's clarinet murmurs the blues in a low,reedy tone while Louis scat-sings gentle answer-phrases. Hines' masterful solo (yes,sophisticated and possibly urbane, certainly thrilling; but showing clearly Louis' influence on Hines) precedes Louis' return; the trumpet holds a single high note for four bars, then completes the chorus. Piano chords bring the music down from Louis' last high note to middle ground, and the trumpet comes back broad and sad to say the last word.

On Tight Like This, Heah Me Talkin' To Ya? and A Monday Date we can study the departure from Louis' records of the old feeling. Tight Like This, even without the New Orleans whore-house beat, is probably Louis' most salacious record. In Jazzmen, C. E. Smith called it "jive to the bone"; which is pretty close. No "My Daddy Rocks Me" lyrics; the music does it. I hope this observation will neither augment nor spoil anyone's pleasure in this music as music. Most of the record consists of Louis' solo against the changing rhythm; three choruses of skilfully developed tension and majestic beauty.

Heah Me Talkin' To Ya? includes a fine solo chorus by Hines, one of Redman's soap-bubbly alto solos, and a high, magnificent trumpet solo over the band's organ chords and Zutty's sharp knuckleknocking. A Monday Date, also recorded by Hines and Noone, is played quite fast; with a jive introduction and a fairly straight rendition of the silly words by Armstrong. The first chorus is played in improvised ensemble; and it's miserably inadequate, compared to the old Hot Five. Louis, of course, plays a startling solo; this time high, muted and with a very pronounced rhythm. But the rest of the record is sad, compared to such relaxed, unified and genuinely expressive music as Ory's Creole Trombone or Willie The Weeper.

More to the point, no doubt, would be an analysis of the changes in Armstrong's style which can be observed in these records; and I'm sorry I haven't either the time or space to go into that. But it's Louis' playing, and to a lesser extent Hines' and Zutty's, that makes these records so valuable in spite of their faults. You probably have them already; so just sit down and listen.

(For more reviews of reissues, please turn back to page 77.)

DONT MISS any of the new J. I. reissues — seven of the greatest hot records, only $1 each!

Editorial

A HISTORY OF JAZZ INFORMATION

EDITOR'S NOTE

During J.I.'s life, we were usually reticent about ourselves and our various difficulties. The following is published for the benefit of those readers who may be curious about the "inside" story of J.I.

JAZZ INFORMATION was born in the same week as the second world war. The first number was written, mimeographed and mailed late one night in the back room of the 52nd Street Commodore Music Shop. The date was September 8, 1939.

Typing stencils, addressing envelopes and rolling the hand mimeograph all night were the four people who founded J.I.: three former Columbia College students, Ralph Gleason, Ralph Toledano and Eugene Williams, and one small blonde (Gleason warned he'd seen her first), Jean Rayburn. Toledano and Williams had shared the Columbia Jester's jazz column for several years, while Gleason had reviewed records for the Columbia Spectator.

We had been cooking up the idea of a hot jazz magazine for a long time. What we wanted most was to produce a monthly or even quarterly review, something like Panassie's Jazz Hot but American in language, attitude and direction, as a jazz magazine should be. It's strange, now, to think that one of the titles proposed was Swing Music.

After examining our pockets and discussing the project with Milt Gabler (whose finger was on the public pulse), the young editors (average age 22) had given up these ambitious plans for the time being. Instead, we decided in favor of a weekly newsletter, which could provide the advantages of late news and up-to-date record reviews together with low cost and simple production.

From this, we thought, a more impressive format might grow if public interest were strong enough. The name JAZZ INFORMATION was suggested by Milt Gabler, who also let the J.I. quartet use his office, mimeograph and (most important) his mailing list, freely.

There was no advance publicity; no one in the jazz field had ever heard of any member of the new organization. But, we reasoned, no one already known as a jazz writer seemed ready to take on a job like this; and it ought to be done. If J.I. began well and grew better, support would be forthcoming. And so, with only Milt Gabler's encouragement and a few pats on the back from other people, the plan was concluded and the first issue of JAZZ INFORMATION whipped together overnight at the Commodore.

When Ruthie Gordon came in, the next day, to open the shop for business, almost a thousand copies were being piled into the Gleason Dodge. They were dumped at the Radio City post office, and a few extra copies given to local record shops for free distribution. JAZZ INFORMATION was launched; and with a total investment of about thirty dollars.

The first number (now rare, and something of a collectors' item) was only a faint promise of what J.I. was to become. Four sheets, printed on one side only, featured news stories on Columbia's reissue plans, Stacy's move to the Crosby band, Hawkins' first American plans, the new United States Record Corp., and so forth. There was a brief record column, a "Bandwagon" department of spot news, and our first collectors' notes, with an item on the up-and-coming Solo Art label and a plug for Art Hodes, whom we'd heard playing in a Staten Island joint on Dan Qualey's recommendation.

"Our Own Jelly-Roll Department", first of a short-lived series, pointed out the greater accuracy of J.I.'s news so effectively (as we learned later) that the offended editors of Down Beat closed their columns to all J.I. publicity for some time. A front page editorial, introducing the magazine to its future subscribers, said:

"JAZZ INFORMATION is not designed to compete with any existing trade papers or jitterbug sheets. It will be devoted exclusively to the weekly coverage of the latest news and records in the hot jazz field, supplemented from time to time by short historical and critical articles on the subject....

"We feel that JAZZ INFORMATION fulfills a unique and important function in American jazz music...Being a non-commercial venture, the continuance of JAZZ INFORMATION depends entirely on what support it receives from those whose interest in jazz goes beyond Tin Pan Alley and the sensationalism of the swing fad. We believe that there are enough such people to keep us alive."

Our purpose in beginning JAZZ INFORMATION could be defined as simply as that: to publish what American hot fans wanted, a hot jazz magazine, and to give it a dignified and rigorously non-commercial approach. Reorientations of this policy came later, as we learned more about what J.I.'s readers wanted, and what we wanted to give them. But that was the cornerstone: an American jazz magazine with self-respect, accuracy and intelligence.

With the first issue safely in the mails, we rushed down to 505 Fifth Avenue to rent a mailing privilege at the address we'd already chosen. Then we went to sleep. The next morning, the answers began to roll in.

And they kept rolling, so enthusiastically that for the first year J.I. required only a few dollars more than we'd originally invested. We got our first subscriptions, in fact, the night Vol. I, No. 1 went to press, when Dan Qualey and some of his friends ("Stalebread" Stiber and George Kaplan) stopped on the way to a Ross Tavern session to drop 25-cent pieces through the Commodore's transom. The first few issues were sent out to a large mailing list, and soon an adequate backlog of subscriptions had been built up.

Subscriptions came from all over the United States; later, from Canada, South America, Europe, South Africa, Japan. Obtaining the tentative cooperation of the Hot Record Society, we sent out circulars on their mailing list, on a commission basis. Ads were inserted in Down Beat and Tempo; hot fans passed the word along. One by one we found music stores to sell J.I. in New York, Philadelphia, Cambridge, Los Angeles, Chicago, San Francisco, Boston, Cleveland and other cities. A shipment of every issue went to London.

Meanwhile, editorial conferences were being held, and the work of the magazine done, in various places and at odd hours. One of the editors (Williams) was working regularly on a commercial magazine; another (Toledano) was free-lancing. Gleason lived in Westchester and had to drive in to New York. The work was done alternately at Williams' home and Toledano's.

At a heated session in the Shanty at Sixth Avenue and 52nd, it was decided that the response to J.I.'s first issue justified an immediate change of format. Mimeographing was too difficult, the resulting paper too messy. So No. 2 was published September 19 as a four-page leaflet printed by photo-offset. J.I. was already more than a newsletter; it was becoming a magazine, and grew steadily in that direction as the editors mastered photo-offset technique.

Production of the magazine from then on entailed writing the copy, retyping it twice to justify the margins, laying it out on large dummy sheets and taking it to the printers. When the copies were ready we picked them up from the printer, folded the 11 x 17 sheets by hand, inserted them in hand-addressed envelopes and packages, and carted them off to the post office. Headlines for the lead stories were pasted together, letter by letter, from the New York Post's boldface subheads. (Later, for a while, we got someone to handletter them, which was easier but looked worse.) Toledano and Williams shared the record column at first, while Gleason was in charge of the news department; Williams wrote the collectors' column and Rayburn (then listed as Circulation Manager) handled subscriptions and book-keeping. Everyone took a hand in the unpleasant chores of typing copy, addressing and mailing.

So it went for the next few issues while we struggled to keep our weekly schedule, usually staying up all night to take the finished dummy to the printers early in the morning. (We never got over this bad habit, and often worked fiercely all night only to find there was too much left to be done.) After six issues, the present editor had to give up his regular job. From then on, J.I. was a fulltime business, first for three people, then for two and (in the end) for one.

Two conclusions were soon evident.

First, no authentic hot jazz magazine could expect big profits; consequently it was not only more honest, but more intelligent to follow our own inclination toward a straightforward ("dogmatic") policy, rather than try appeasing everyone by indiscriminate attention to all phases of "jazz". We didn't lack advisors, of course, to recommend a policy of treading softly and offending no one. Later events proved we were right in ignoring them; for a magazine similar to J.I., but with an indeterminate policy and know-nothing record reviews, could not succeed.

Second, genuine and tasteful interest in real hot jazz was approaching a point where it might support a non-commercial publication; and the younger collectors, eager for education, absorbed each issue and asked for more. But it was impossible to obtain more than a limited amount of advertising, and the magazine had to be supported by subscriptions. Our hopes of obtaining some recompense for our work proved vain, and during the two years of J.I. the only money paid out was for outside stenographic help.

It was over questions of policy as well as the division of labor that our first editorial disagreement occurred. The result was that Ralph Toledano departed from the magazine with the sixth issue. Two weeks later his name went off the masthead and in December Jean Rayburn, who had been assuming more and more of the magazine's responsibilities, was listed with Gleason and Williams as co-editor. But the original informal partnership was not dissolved until an arbitrator's decision, in the spring of 1940, awarded Toledano $10.75 (the amount of his original investment in J.I.) in full settlement of his claim.

The new magazine continued to scoop the music trade papers on news, record reviews and collectors' dope. New subscriptions kept coming in; the press run, which had been reduced from an initial 1500 to 800, was advanced to 1000 again. Number 9, published November 7, 1939, was our first eight-page issue. After that, we published eight-page J.I.'s whenever copy, advertising and finances warranted. Larger numbers made room for articles, too. Wally Schaap wrote several articles on Jazzmen Abroad; a Philadelphia collector contributed an anonymous piece on Rod Cless; Frank Marshall Davis sent a long letter from Chicago; Walter Sidney wrote his first piece on hot music, From Bach to Jazz.

The first serious setback came in December, four months after J.I. had begun. For family reasons, Gleason was unable to go on commuting between New York and Westchester. That meant that Rayburn, who lived nearby and drove in with him, had to quit too. It was up to the present editor to give up the magazine or to continue alone with whatever help he could find. He decided to continue. The January 5 issue listed him, therefore, as Editor; while the two retired partners, who hoped to come back to the magazine later, were kept on as Associates.

The next few months were incredibly hectic. Just as its scope and difficulties were increasing, J.I. had become a one-man job. Getting the news and ad copy, running around town, doing all the production and circulation work with only some occasional family assistance, the editor had to work night and day to keep the paper going.

The issues began to appear less regularly, at the same time that they were growing bigger and better. J.I. was finally mentioned, though not by name, in Down Beat; and replied at too great length, perhaps, to a scurrilous attack. John O'Hara's silly pronouncements on jazz were censured by Ed Morrow. Orin Blackstone sent a piece on "Kid" Rena from New Orleans. An oldtime Chicago collector contributed a piece on Rosy McHargue, under a pseudonym. Louis Harap turned in an interesting article on Boogie Woogie and the Player Piano.

In the semi-anniversary issue we had our first piece by William Russell, on Zue Robertson; a new department was introduced, the Safety Valve, in which prominent collectors were asked to blow their top and usually did. This issue included, too, the first of four instalments of Bill Love's Original Labels classification. This feature, which was jumped on then and afterwards by J.I.'s enemies, was fairly expensive to run. But the label photostats looked pretty, and we found out just how many collectors were interested in labels (we weren't, ourselves) by the steady demand for these back numbers.

George Frazier contributed a slangy blast whose language embroiled us with the Philadelphia Hot Club; more Safety Valves came in, record reviews and collectors' columns were lengthened. Music news from Chicago, which had first been handled by Donel O'Brien, was now contributed by John Steiner. And the editor was saved much of the tedious work of gathering New York news by the steadfast loyalty of Herman Rosenberg (of whom more later).

Then came another blow. In February the support of the H.R.S. (which, we acknowledge willingly, had been very useful, whatever we thought of the spirit it was offered in) was abruptly withdrawn and replaced by bitter antagonism. This was regrettable, not so much because a smear campaign could damage J.I., but because J.I. had always wanted and tried to present a complete, unbiased picture of the jazz field. Perhaps the less said about this disgraceful episode the better; but for the record, it should be said that Steve Smith's personal feud against J.I. was begun and sustained by Smith against our wishes, and in spite of our attempts to prevent it.

Not that it did us any appreciable harm. On the contrary, we found that to many, it seemed a distinction to be on the H.R.S. "purge list". Smith's unrelenting opposition to everything J.I. did was often an inspiration to us to work harder and longer. True, we did find it impossible to give the H.R.S. much publicity without their co-operation; but that didn't matter so much when that organization was plainly turning from hot jazz to more lucrative activities.

Meanwhile, overwork and loss of sleep were hanging over the editor's head. Irregularity of publication increased, the circulation curve was leveling off, and there was no time even to consider the important changes which the magazine was ready to undergo. When it was impossible to do any more, an editorial in the issue of June 14, 1940 (Volume One, Number 35) announced a short suspension of publication. When that issue had been mailed, Williams went to visit Gleason in the country for several weeks, uncertain whether J.I. would reorganize or fold up completely.

* * *

One thing was evident: the weekly J.I. could not go on. During the next month we considered the advantages of fortnightly or even monthly publication, and finally chose a fortnightly schedule. A digest format, half the old size, would permit more attractive make-up; and the copies could be mailed just as they came from the binders, with no folding necessary. The contents of one of the eight-page weeklies could be more effectively displayed on sixteen smaller pages. Photographs and decorations could be used better.

The price was to be raised from 10 to 15 cents a copy, while the annual subscription remained $3.00. Increased advertising and circulation, we hoped, would help pay the printing bills. In resuming publication, our chances were much better than they had been a year before; we had experience, confidence and many faithful friends and readers.

Feeling more hopeful, the editor went back to New York to start work on Volume Two, Number One. Gleason quit a job he'd held all spring to come in and help again as full-time Associate Editor. Rayburn arrived too, and went to work revising the subscription files and typing reproduction copy, until she found a paying job elsewhere. A second-hand addressograph and a third-class mailing permit were acquired. Tired of cutting up the *Post*, we got a few draftsmen's lettering stencils; when these proved inadequate we took up the Fototype system which has been used successfully ever since.

On July 26, 1940, the first issue in the new format appeared. It had 36 pages, of which 5½ were advertisements. Besides the usual news, reviews, collectors' column and other departments, there was room for articles. George Hoefer of *Down Beat* had written a Safety Valve, and there was a biography of Omer Simeon (first in the New Orleans Clarinets series) by the editor and Herman Rosenberg.

We'd first met Herman at the H.R.S. shop. That was before he had been publicized in the trade press as "the terrific little guy who knows everything before it happens." At first, Herman later told us, he didn't think we were the right guys to put out a good jazz magazine. But he took to us soon, and through J.I.'s two years of publication he has been one of our most loyal (and useful) friends. We, on our part, thought Herman quite a remarkable character, and still do. There's a lot more we'd like to be able to tell you about.

Herman helped J.I. in countless important ways, just because he liked the magazine. He'd begun with news, sometimes phoning in tips from Nick's or the Cafe at three in the morning. When the staff had shrunk to one, Herman stepped into the breach and kept us supplied with all sorts of local and national news during the last months of Volume One. Now, he began to hunt up historical material: facts, stories, photographs galore. It was

Herman who looked up Omer Simeon, in town with Hines' band, and arranged an interview. After that he worked with us on many stories, and got some good ones on his own.

The July number, like J.I.'s first issue, was sent out and advertised freely; and again, the results were rewarding. But the printer's bill was staggering. The increased costs began to run up a deficit which, since then, has wavered between three and five hundred dollars. J.I. had no "angel", except the editor himself, who paid bills and expenses out of his own pocket when the treasury ran low. These small expenditures piled up to a sizeable investment in the magazine.

We soon found that our ideas for Volume Two were pretty ambitious even for a two-man staff. Once more, overwork and deadline nerves made us jittery and strained. But we went on improving the magazine. The first four covers were plain, practical designs. Then we got our friend Ed Rice, a former Columbia Jester editor, to draw some covers. (His trumpet player, for No. 5, was the best.) In November we changed to photographic covers, using the work of Charles Peterson, Otto Hess and our friend Occy Romaine. For the Christmas issue, we reproduced Charles Delaunay's sensitive and unusual drawing of Louis; once we got an impressionistic sketch from Bill Martin.

By November, we'd changed the news presentation from newspaper to magazine style. We'd expanded the old departments and added an important new one: Robert Quinlisk's column on Jazz Classics.

Perhaps it may be admitted, now, that this department (which took such a long time to reach its stride) was written by the editor. He took on the job, though already overloaded with work, because we thought it was very much worth doing and no one else could be found to do it. At first the Quinlisk column was the last, most hastily written and worst part of each issue; a successful but probably ill-advised attempt was made to build up a distinct and rather eccentric personality for Quinnie.

Soon, however, "Quinlisk" had to give up the too ambitious aim of covering, in a series of columns, the important jazz records (a job which may now be accomplished by the forthcoming Jazz Record Book). Reissues were being released in dozens by Columbia and other companies, so Quinnie settled down to the difficult enough task of reviewing them as they appeared. Soon he had dropped back into the editor's usual style.

"Quinlisk" wrote seriously and uncompromisingly. Howls of protest soon came from offended Bixians, advocates of swing style, and such. Harsh criticism of certain "classics" brought forth complaints from the same people who'd complained previously that J.I. would approve any record if it was only old enough.

Of course, the standards of good jazz which Quinlisk insisted on were simply more rigorous expressions of J.I.'s own standards, developed positively rather than (as they had been sometimes) by omission. Many of our readers enjoyed Quinlisk's writings and said so; while even those who thought he was a lousy "purist" admitted that he often made sense.

The old departments grew during the second year of publication. The record reviews included long analyses of the more important records. Quinlisk discussed most of the Bluebird, Columbia and Decca reissues as they appeared. The collectors' column printed the usual minor-interest stuff besides many new discoveries. There were the Cripple Clarence Streamline Train which had been unnoticed in the Decca catalog for years; Dick Rieber's Oliver Gennett find and Keith Holst's unissued Tesch; the unheard-of Danny Altier Vocalion with Muggsy, O'Brien, Stacy and Wettling. This column also reprinted useful information from other publications, scotched false reports and established correct personnels for many old records.

J.I.'s policy was maturing rapidly in all these departments and in the selection and editing of feature articles. First, there was the series on New Orleans Clarinets. This was to have included biographies of the most important clarinetists from way down yonder, with a concluding essay on the N. O. clarinet style. We couldn't complete that plan: no one would consent to write the summation, a promised article on George Baquet never materialized, we couldn't get anything on the white clarinets. Johnny Dodds died just a few days before our second Chicago reporter, Wes Neff, was to interview him for a story, and there was a hectic attempt to put together a memorial issue for that great musician. Wes sent whatever facts and photographs he could garner on short notice; Bill Russell, driving from San Francisco, took time off to airmail a letter about Johnny.

Later Wes sent in a biography and complete discography of Jimmie Noone. George Hoefer caught Barney Bigard in Chicago and wrote him up. Mary Karoley's meticulous story of Sidney Bechet was accompanied by John Reid's fine discography of Sid. Herman and the editor collaborated on the stories of Edmond Hall and Albert Nicholas. The last of the series, Orin Blackstone's article on Big Eye, was excellent.

In the second issue there was an article by Bob Sales on Fate Marable, which brought Down Beat's wrath on us again. Fate ~~liked Louis~~ Armstrong pretty well, and said so; but Down Beat's money was on Emmet Hardy.

Number 4 was a scoop issue. Bill Love's valuable Ma Rainey discography was ready for publication. We'd learned somehow (probably from Bill Riddle) that Ma had been heard of last in Columbus, Georgia. Advised and egged on by Dan Qualey, we'd written Ma what now seems to us a very odd letter, and sent it in care of the Columbus postmaster. A week later we learned that Ma had been dead eight months, unremembered even by the colored press! The short biography which her brother, Thomas Pridgett, sent us was the first authentic published information on Ma's life. He promised photographs, too; but they never came.

Other features of Volume Two were Dave Stuart's fine story on Kid Ory, George Beall's encyclopedic study of "Forgotten Giants" of the trumpet, Don Haynes' mercilessly blue-penciled piece on Cow Cow. In 1941 the emphasis shifted to criticism, with Walter Sidney and Jim Higgins contributing thoughtful essays and Panassie sending articles on Louis, Noone and Jelly Roll Morton. There were a number of shorter articles by musicians and collectors. Fine old photographs came from Herman in New York and Wes Neff in Chicago and Orin Blackstone in New Orleans; Ed Rice furnished spot drawings; we became more adept in using Fototype and photostats to make J.I. more attractive.

In the December 6 issue came an announcement as exciting, to us, as J.I.'s own beginning. This was the first Limited Edition reissue, the tests of which sounded even better to our ears than the original Gennetts. Your enthusiastic response to this offer, and to later releases, was heartening.

Things were far from smooth, even difficult. But J.I. was still improving in December when a death in Gleason's family took him back to Westchester, this time to stay. From then on, J.I. was a one-man job again. There couldn't be any thought of stopping publication, and there was no time to reorganize and look for new partners. With more work than ever to be done, including the new labor of packing and shipping the reissues, the editor went ahead on the Christmas issue alone.

Not surprisingly, it came out late. And with some time off during the holidays, the following issue had to be dated January 24; it was three weeks overdue.

During February, by cutting down to 24 pages and hiring a part-time typist, J.I. was kept almost on schedule. By the end of the month, the staying power the editor had been drawing on so long was gone. He went to a doctor, who said that a few weeks of complete rest were essential.

So in the issue of March 21, 1941, a temporary suspension of publication was announced. The third J.I. reissue, planned long before, was then ready; and it too was announced, when Milt Gabler agreed that Commodore would ship the orders. When the issue was in the mail, the editor went to a hospital and spent most of the next three weeks sleeping.

Then it turned out that he couldn't go back to work at all. His doctor thought it might be a good idea to spend the next year getting rid of that lung spot. (Incidentally, it wasn't either tuberculosis or pernicious anemia, as the trade papers solicitously reported; rather, a tricky lung condition which sometimes goes with a physical breakdown.)

Home again in April, the editor had no more exaggerated ideas of his physical endurance. A few weeks later he had packed up, put some furniture, records and the good old addressograph into storage, and moved out to the country near Gleason's. What was left of JAZZ INFORMATION went along in a few packing-boxes.

As far as the editor was concerned, the magazine was through. This time there could be no doubt about that. And no one would take the responsibility of keeping it going. So he began the last one-man job: the final issue of J.I.

Still optimistic, he planned it for July publication. Then it had to be postponed until August and now, at the end of October, is finally completed.

Almost all of J.I.'s planned and leftover material was included. Perhaps this isn't all that a 104-page J.I. should be — it's not too well balanced, and it was assembled in a determined but not a very cheerful spirit. But no complaints will be accepted.

* * *

There isn't room for the many other memories: of Ross Tavern, where Art Hodes, George Zack, Rod Cless, Jimmy Yancey played.... the Boston Hoax... trying to get Ad Reinhardt to do a cover.... Lonesome Blues... Herman bounding up the stairs with that Red Hot Peppers photograph.... Dan Qualey listening to any good piano record... a weekend in Saratoga... how we looked after working all night... the Beetle ... airmail specials and telegrams at eight A.M.... Stella Brooks and Hodes at the Pirate's Den... Harry Gennett's barn.... the Columbia reissue contest that flopped... those rumors... having dinner with Herman was always an interesting experience... everything going wrong on the Keppard reissue time after time.... playing deck tennis in the dining room for relaxation... waiting to hear the reissues had been shipped.... Hodes' band at Childs'... matching pennies.... Stalebread and Texas blues... learning to play blues piano... raw gin and straight bourbon ... the editor's last two blowouts... Sidney Bechet as entertainer.... Milt Gabler's sessions at Ryan's.... Jelly Roll Morton's lectures on jazz.... Gleason and Rayburn getting married one weekend between Nos. 6 and 7 of Volume Two.... Friday nights at the Commodore.... Hoyte Kline's visit to New York.... tracking down Varsity's Gennett race reissues... Dan Qualey's conversation and his jokes... you got to break down, that's all.

And there are a lot of friends to thank for having made J.I. possible. Ralph and Jean Gleason don't have to be thanked; Milt Gabler's enthusiastic co-operation and the phenomenal Herman have been mentioned already. Chicago correspondents Wesley M. Neff and John Steiner contributed their services cheerfully, and usually came through in the pinches.

Besides these, there was a group of friends who stood by the magazine in its younger days and saw it through to the end: George M. Avakian, George E. Beall, Orin Blackstone, Hoyte D. Kline, Alfred W. Lion, William C. Love, John D. Reid, Dick Rieber, William Russell, Dave Stuart, Dan Qualey.

J.I. is also specially indebted to Art Feher, John Hammond, George Hoefer Jr., Charles Miller, Fred R. Miller, Hugues Panassie, Octave Romaine, Walter E. Schaap.

And to E. M. Ashcraft III, John Beeby, Ralph Berton, Frank Marshall Davis, Charles Delaunay, Dave Dexter Jr., Charles Emge, George Frazier, Otto Hess, Merrill M. Hammond Jr., James Higgins, Kay Johns, Mary E. Karoley, Harry Mereness Jr., Edward Morrow, Charles Peterson, B. E. Riddle, Charles Payne Rogers, Charles Rossi, Ross Russell, Robert B. Sales, Stephen H. Sholes, Walter Sidney, Margo Terry, Stanley Warren, Donald Wolf, and Leslie Zacheis.

We can't name the scores of musicians who patiently gave us information and loaned us valuable photographs; or a hundred more collectors who contributed importantly. We're grateful, too, to the subscribers who plugged J.I. and supported it, who waited patiently for late issues and tardily shipped records, who understood that we could not acknowledge all their letters and whose enthusiasm was one of the best things about JAZZ INFORMATION.

* * *

The last two years have not been exactly the time of our lives. To its editors, JAZZ INFORMATION brought as much trouble as pleasure. But its worth must be measured in terms of usefulness to readers; and if their letters are a fair indication, J.I. really did in some degree "fulfill a unique and important function in American jazz music."

We made plenty of mistakes. The greatest was in being too ambitious for J.I. If our standards had been less severe, if we hadn't increased the magazine's scope (and our own tasks) continually, J.I. might still be publishing today. But so much needed to be done; and we couldn't have expected the bad luck which kept coming.

When we suspended publication in March 1941, many subscribers jumped to the conclusion that J.I. was in financial difficulties. As this story has shown, the magazine was no pot of gold; but financial troubles were only a contributing cause, perhaps not even a major one, of J.I.'s collapse. Our worst money worries, in fact, were behind us; and the deficit, though large, was not increasing. J.I. had to suspend, quite simply, because it was dependent on a very small staff which, one by one, had to give up.

One thing which we don't include among our mistakes is J.I.'s editorial policy. With a different policy, J.I. might have been more "successful"; but it wouldn't have been worth working quite so hard for.

When J.I. began publication, it was America's first magazine devoted exclusively to hot music. Before J.I., you could find information, sometimes an interesting article or photograph, in the trade papers — but only by wading through a morass of irrelevant and usually offensive tripe.

So JAZZ INFORMATION'S first point of policy was to confine its activities to hot jazz. The phrase, of course, is susceptible to many definitions; necessarily, we chose our own.

The second point was to be non-commercial; which means simply that we wanted to publish a good magazine more than we wanted a profitable one. Whether the two are mutually exclusive, as we believe, is another question. And J.I.'s non-commercialism was journalistic, not musical. The term "non - commercial" as a musical criterion is confusing and rather foolish, and we have tried to avoid it.

Being a non-commercial hot jazz magazine, J.I. could not appeal to working musicians. Musicians, as a rule, are understandably more interested in getting and holding a job than in hot music. And we made no appeal to jitterbugs; J.I.'s readers had to be hot fans, collectors, and the few musicians who really care about jazz.

That meant no ads from big-name bands, no full page displays from musical instrument manufacturers. J.I. had to be supported by its circulation, not by advertising. And in forswearing the mass appeal of leggy pictures, fan stuff and general vulgarity, it limited its circulation to a small group. As Jim Dugan expressed it, J.I. was for "more advanced students". It had classified itself as a "little magazine", and the salaried boys of the trade press had their chance to crack wise just as if their slick paper and larger circulation made them any more respectable.

The problem of a "little" magazine is that, unlike its profitable contemporaries, it must have its own critical standards. We were told that jazz was "the last thing in the world to be 'dogmatic' about" — but even if that were true, why bother with an opinionless magazine at all?

So J.I. took the basic theory and background of jazz much as it was established in Jazzmen, forsaking the amorphous, too eclectic methods of earlier French and American writers. But it went further than Jazzmen; it pointed out the very tenuous link between the swing music of today and the genuine, exciting music of the folk blues and the New Orleans jazz tradition.

J.I.'s record reviews, instrumental in the magazine's early popularity, told bluntly what the editors thought. They analyzed small band jazz records and piano solos, skimmed the better large bands and gave full approval to very few of the new records. The big swing bands in general were criticized for what they are: watered-down, emasculated, often hysterical remnanets of the jazz tradition. In the small-band field, too, we attacked such off-the-track ventures as John Kirby's. As a result, hundreds of record collectors praised J.I.'s reviews as the most dependable to be found. Other welcome innovations were publication of full personnels wherever practicable and the fullest possible coverage of blues and other "race" releases.

Hot fans found it hard, sometimes, to understand our viewpoint unless they were familiar with the background — the old jazz records. Thus the majority of J.I.'s readers were collectors. Recognition of this majority was expressed in our "Collectors Items" department, which took up the job of correcting and annotating Hot Discography, aiming at a complete documentation of jazz records, good and bad.

But J.I. wasn't entirely a "collectors' magazine". Our voice was raised against the tastes of large groups of collectors. We didn't hesitate to criticize old records as severely as new ones when they failed to meet our standards. We tried to knock down some of the old accepted tin gods, as well as the latest. But we preferred to forget the phonies and talk about the real jazzmen who'd been neglected by other writers and publications.

J.I.'s policy had begun to crystallize by the end of the first year. We took the risk of talking about jazz seriously, and in terms which seemed strange to many. We held the position, obvious enough to anyone who knows the music, that the real jazz is the stuff which came out of New Orleans, flavored with ragtime and rooted in the blues; that this music is as valid today as it ever was, and that the best hope for jazz is to rediscover those roots.

To understand this wonderful music you must know it. Without knowledge, and the taste which it forms, no one is entitled to assume that he can be "his own critic". We suggest humbly that if people will listen to the real jazz (chiefly on records), they will develop good taste. Unfortunately, too many people are prepared to insist that their own taste is good enough, and to look with scorn and suspicion on those who pretend to know more about it.

They are encouraged in this error by the dozens of pseudo-critics who write for the popular magazines. They are warned against "purists", musical snobs and kill-joys. They are even told that all critics are fools, usually because they spend more time listening to music and thinking about it than learning to play a smooth second-alto part. They hear sneers at the "label collector" who loves his old records (only because they're rare, of course) but wouldn't go around the corner to hear some jive-butcher's "jam session".

Actually the quarrel is not between "dead" and "live" music, "commercial" or "non-commercial", "Negro jazz" or "white jazz". It's between two kinds of music — jazz and quasi-jazz — and between two kinds of taste — discriminating and sloppy. J.I. stood for good jazz and good taste; it talked up the old-timers, colored and white alike, who played good jazz; and it did everything in its power to support the men, colored and white alike, who are playing good jazz today.

That's about all. We avoided the easier and more profitable course, and we did our best. Now, with J.I. gone and nothing to take its place, rabble-rousers and self-advertisers will be free to continue assuring their readers that it's fun to be foolish. The atrocious criticism of Down Beat, Music and Rhythm and such publications will seldom be contradicted. The movies will tell the story of jazz in their inimitable way, the radio will present the Chamber Music Society of Lower Basin Street.

For all these reasons, we're sorry that J.I.'s campaign must be ended. But perhaps in two years we did accomplish something; and if J.I. can't be revived soon, someone else will get mad enough to start a new jazz magazine for America.

...keep 'em turning!
JAZZ INFORMATION
BOX 6, STATION H, NEW YORK CITY

READERS' COMMENTS

Nashville, Tennessee...

Jazz, it seems, is losing a decisive battle; one it can ill afford to lose. Of course, I don't know the details behind your suspension, but is there really no hope? It isn't necessary that we have a form such as the latter stages were. Hell, man, give us a mimeographed sheet, but jazz needs a voice!

Maybe you haven't received the support you need; well, now we know we can lose you, we should stand more firmly. Is there nothing we can do?

I'm not making any arrangements about the balance of my subscription. I don't want to give up so easily. If J.I. folds, two and a half strikes are against any other jazz mag getting under way. Don't leave us to the mercy of Down Beat and its followers.

And these reissues, they are being handled so beautifully! You shot high, and you almost got there. Can't we give you a boost?

Mark C. Wilkerson

Portland, Oregon...

I was very sorry to hear that JAZZ INFORMATION is suspending publication. Although I have not been a subscriber, I have read almost all the issues — borrowed from a friend. I suppose it is people like myself — who read INFO but didn't contribute to its support — who are responsible for its folding. I have a horrible feeling of guilt.

I should like to join other readers in saying that JAZZ INFORMATION was an excellent publication. I hope that it can somehow be started again, in which case I hope to be in on its birth instead of its death.

Richard Meier

Youngstown, Ohio...

I hope this next issue won't be the last J.I. I've missed it a great deal these past few months, and wish there was some way you could get the financial backing to start steady publication again, and to gather enough congenial guys around you to take the burden off your shoulders.

Let me congratulate you particularly on your taste in choosing reissues under your own label. That Stock Yards Strut is one of the top-ranking jam records I've ever heard.

John H. Treudley

San Francisco, California...

I sincerely hope you will be able to continue your estimable magazine. I would gladly pay twice the price if it would help to keep J.I. on the press. To the many collectors, and non-collectors, who read your stuff, I should think a few dollars more per year would make it worth your while (and surely theirs) to try to continue.

I am positive that many people would be willing to contribute more than the nominal subscription to keep J.I. going. Why don't you try this approach?

Forrest Browne

Ottawa, Canada...

I was sorry to receive your July 31st letter, and to hear of your suspension of publication, but was pleasantly surprised to know that I'll get my money's worth, anyway - unlike other papers I've subscribed to.

E. B. Mulkins

Boston, Massachusetts...

Your letter of July 31 left me with distinctly mixed feelings. Naturally I'll be glad to get the new reissues, but at the cost of receiving no more J.I.'s they come a little high.

You've certainly to bring out a series of collectors' dream records. You deserve the highest compliments for the superb quality of the dubbing jobs — I wish the Columbia people had always done as well with theirs.

Timothy Leary, Jr.

BLUE

NOTE

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